

INDIA'S PREMIER RULING PRINCE

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A Rapid Sketch of the Man and His Work

BY

THEO. LA TOUCHE

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FIRST among the five hundred and odd Ruling Princes of India stands His Exalted Highness Sir Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur, G.C.S.I., the 7th Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar, with the unique dynastic title of 'Faithful Ally of the British Government.'

His Dominions form the heart of the sub-continent of India, 82,700 square miles in extent with a population of nearly sixteen millions and an average annual revenue of nine crores of rupees. His capital city, Hyderabad, is the fourth largest city in India, and is sometimes alluded to as 'The City of the Char Minar,' from the charming Qut'b Shahi monument which forms the hub of the City and appears on the State's coinage.

This sole surviving relic of the splendour that was the Moghul Empire was once yet larger, stretching to the north and to the south and to the eastern sea; and for a century before the British designated their colonies by that name, 'The Dominions' was a familiar term for the spacious territories of the Nizam; they are still known as H. E. H. the Nizam's Dominions. From the time the kingdom of Oudh disappeared, no Indian State can hold its head up to the Nizam's Dominions, which are large enough to cover England and Scotland and part of Wales. India's Premier State is indeed a realm of international stature and importance.

It is not, however, by virtue of the vast extent of his Dominions alone that His Exalted Highness towers head and shoulders above the Princely Order of India; nor merely by the unique dynastic title of 'Faithful Ally,' or any other of his titles, does he hold a pre-eminent position among the Princes of India. It cannot be gainsaid that, not only his own subjects, but the 100 millions of Muslims who constitute one of the two major

communities of India, still look up to him as *Shah-e-Deccan* (King of the Deccan). The influence he has over these millions may be gauged by the fact that the Manifestos he issues are even at this day respected by them like the Imperial *Firmans* of Moghul Delhi. In fact, his word carries weight throughout the Muslim world, and his is a name to conjure with. Such are the esteem and reverence in which he is held by Indian Muslims that when the Khilafat ended with the deposition of the last Sultan of Turkey, there was a widespread movement to invest him with the mantle of Khalifa.

Again, he still possesses the symbols of sovereign independence, the legacy of the founder of his Dominions, in the shape of his own coinage, paper currency and stamps. Apart from this, within his extensive Dominions are feudatory nobles holding estates which in size, population and revenue are equal, and in many cases surpass, several small Indian States. One of these fief holders is the Sultan of Makalla, who is styled 'His Highness,' is entitled to a 'salute' and has direct treaty relations with the British Government. Moreover, the Nizam possesses the right of Patent and confers 'Birthday Honours' of *Nawab* and *Raja* upon his subjects in recognition of their meritorious services.

It is a well-attested, but little known, historical fact, that the Nizam of Hyderabad was one of the two Indian potentates (the other being the Nawab Vizier of Oudh) to whom Warren Hastings once offered the title of 'His Majesty.' Animated by the same sentiment which prompted the first Nizam to decline a similar offer made by Nadir Shah, his descendant refused it.

His Exalted Highness belongs to an ancient and most illustrious family and, in the paternal line, is directly descended from Abu Bakr, the first Khalifa, and on the

maternal side his genealogy goes back to the Prophet Mohamed himself. His dynasty was founded by Chin Qilich Khan, the first Nizam-ul-Mulk (Regulator of the State), in 1724 when, disgusted with the intrigues and corruption rampant at Delhi under the regime of the notorious Syeds, the 'Warwicks of the East,' he turned southwards to the Deccan, the Viceroyalty of which he had formerly enjoyed. After fighting his way down to the Deccan against armies sent by Delhi to intercept him, and inflicting a decisive defeat on the Imperial forces in a pitched battle in Berar, he founded a kingdom which was destined to survive through all vicissitudes and political convulsions of nearly three centuries, though in an attenuated form and shorn of its pristine independence.

It was from the Moghul Emperor that the first Nizam received the title of Asaf Jah, "Equal to Asaf," the Grand Vizier of King Solomon, whose sagacity has become proverbial. That the Hyderabad State, like the now defunct principalities of Bengal and Oudh, was 'founded in rebellion and erected on ingratitude' is a historical fallacy. This is disproved by the fact, that though Asaf Jah had perforce no other course left to him but to declare independence, neither he nor any of his immediate successors ever assumed any titles of royalty, but continued to pay allegiance to the Moghul Emperor so long as there was one on the throne. Amid the welter that characterised the dissolution of the Moghul Empire, Asaf Jah looms up as one of the most commanding figures, and strikes the imagination by his stability and statesmanship. He died in 1748, 'having attained,' says Taylor, 'the wonderful age of 104 years.'

Asaf Jah's death-bed instructions to his heir-apparent have been preserved and handed down from generation to generation. They evince his intimate and profound

knowledge of human nature, and mark him out as a shrewd and tactful ruler of men. They form a complete code of statecraft, and have influenced the conduct of successive Nizams, and particularly the present Ruler, who has brought forth out of this treasure things new and old. For instance this last testament which Asaf Jah bequeathed to his descendants says : " Distribute your whole time, night and day, in the service of God and the business of his people, and in relaxation, and never sit idle." The present prosperity of the Hyderabad State is largely due to the practical effect given to this injunction by His Exalted Highness.

Born in 1886, the present Nizam is the seventh in the line of Asaf Jahi rulers, and succeeded his father His Highness Sir Mir Mahbub Ali Khan Bahadur, of revered memory, in 1911, when he was twenty-five years of age. He was educated by able tutors specially selected to prepare him for the responsibilities of rule, and was fully equipped for the task of statecraft when he ascended the *Masnad* of the Asaf Jahs. One of these tutors was the late Sir Brian Egerton who was eminently fitted for the post by the wealth of experience he had gained by teaching the princely minds of other Indian States how to shoot. While he was still the Heir-Apparent, His Exalted Highness gave such striking promise of his future greatness that an Englishman, then on a visit to Hyderabad, has left on record the following intelligence he had gleaned, from responsible sources, about the future ruler :

" I was told that he possessed determination of character and will-power, and that he had a marked aptitude for business, which he showed by digesting the many State documents that, by order of his august father, were placed before him every morning. His up-bringing had been somewhat stoical and strenuous, it was said, and not

altogether unlike that of King Edward VII, who was then nearing the close of his short reign."

The next glimpse we have of the Nizam is afforded us by the same Englishman, who says, "I saw His Highness the Nizam at Delhi, where, at the Coronation Durbar, he as Premier Prince of India, walked first to the thrones and bowed there to King George, who, at the same time and in the same way, returned his homage. He wore a plain English morning suit and the yellow Hyderabad turban, and his quiet manner and dignified bearing seemed to me to make a very favourable impression on the vast assembly."

This word picture, in spite of the years that have rolled by since it was drawn, depicts His Exalted Highness' unassuming manner and dignified deportment to-day. The energies of his mind, ever vigorous in action, are unimpaired; his keen eyes still flash out with determination; his capacity for hard work and the habit of looking into things for himself are still the prominent features of his character. His 'stoical and strenuous up-bringing' accounts for his ascetic simplicity, and his thrifty and frugal life to which the State is chiefly indebted for its phenomenal progress.

The same Englishman who has been quoted above, when he visited Hyderabad a year or two after His Exalted Highness ascended the *Masnad*, was informed by one of the Nizam's ministers that if the young ruler lived long enough, he would do more for Hyderabad than any Nizam had done before. No one acquainted with Modern Hyderabad, the architect of which is Sir Osman Ali Khan, need be told how accurate the minister was in his forecast. Standing at the threshold of his career as the Ruler of Hyderabad, His Exalted Highness pledged his unswerving

loyalty to the British Crown and dedicated himself to the service of his people in the following modest terms :

“ All that I am able to say at present is that it is my highest ambition to be in all respects, both to the Government of India and my own people, what my late father was, a faithful friend on the one hand and a beneficent ruler on the other. I confidently trust that His Imperial Majesty, as well as the people of my own country, will reciprocate my sentiments in the same spirit in which I entertain them.”

Few outside court circles were aware, however, of the tremendous driving power and the administrative genius that lay wrapped up in the young Nizam, waiting the opportunity to burgeon forth. The problems which stared the young Ruler in the face at the outset of his career were so innumerable and formidable that they might well have damped the ardour of the most experienced statesman and driven him to the verge of despair. Indeed the dice seemed to be heavily loaded against the incipient ruler. The whole administrative machinery, built up assiduously by the celebrated Sir Salar Jung I, and renovated and improved by the benignant Mahbub Ali Pashah, was still far behind the times, and needed a thorough overhaul. But such an operation needed money, and plenty of it, if any appreciable progress was to be achieved. The State coffers were badly in need of replenishing ; the rich territories of Berar, thanks to Lord Curzon's grim joke of ‘ Lease-in-Perpetuity,’ yielded what may comparatively be termed a pittance.

A loan might have easily solved the problem ? Yes, very obviously ; but His Exalted Highness was thoroughly conversant with the fact that Hyderabad had in the past often gone a-sorrowing because it went a-borrowing. A loan was out of the question ; none knew better the value

of self-help than Sir Osman Ali Khan ; he had been practising it ever since he knew how to count. Finance is the pivot of progress, and the Nizam realised that the salvation of the State lay in a sound financial policy. Hence one of his first acts on coming into power was to concert the most effective measures possible for the economic husbanding of the State's resources and stabilizing its finances. This was by no means an easy task in the circumstances then prevailing ; it called for a Napoleon of Finance, and such a genius the young Nizam was fortunate to find in the person of the late Sir George Casson Walker, and, subsequently, in the late Rt. Hon. Sir Akbar Hydari. With the help of these financial wizards and their loyal support, the youthful Ruler succeeded in evolving a wise financial policy, and cutting the Gordian knot of Hyderabad's difficulties. It resulted in the formation of a substantial reserve of nine crores of rupees, which really constitutes the core of Hyderabad's prosperity.

That the Hyderabad State has shown and continues to show surplus budgets in days of acute economic depression and financial stringency, in war-time as well as in peacetime ; notwithstanding that enormous sums have been set apart for debt redemption, post-war development, famine insurance, public health, education, vast irrigation projects, railways and road-motor and air transport, frequent and heavy remissions of land revenue and relief during lean seasons, and, above all, mammoth contributions to the War Effort and War Funds,—the achievement may be traced back to the Nizam's personal examples of thrift as well as to his sagacious financial policy and wise spending. The most remarkable feature of the policy is that Hyderabad still remains the lowest taxed country in the whole world.

But all this was not accomplished with the wave of a Merlin's wand. It required, and obtained, enormous sacrifices and self-denials, and, to crown all, hard up-hill work on the part of the Ruler. Indeed, the opening chapter of the Nizam's rule is a brilliant saga of heroic achievements in every field of the administration of his vast Dominions. He boldly took up the challenge and looked facts in the face, like an eagle newly bathed. He perceived that the only path to success lay through hard, indefatigable toil combined with rigorous thrift on the part of the Ruler who should, by his personal example, show that he was in reality the first servant of the State. So, having made up his mind to scorn delights and live laborious days, he girded up his loins and gallantly buckled to the task.

He grasped the nettle of corruption and rooted it out ruthlessly ; plucked away the noisome weeds of peculation that without profit sucked the soil's fertility ; lopped away all superfluous branches in the shape of idle sinecures that drained the State's exchequer. Unscrupulous officials, high and low, soon realised with trembling that the days of *laissez-faire* were over ; that they had in power an extremely sharp-sighted, active task-master, who not only detected sins of commission and omission with amazing quickness and penetration, but struck the authors of them down as rapidly and summarily ; who demanded a whole measure of honest toil and was ready with a full measure of recompense when given. Here was at last a Ruler who could rule and was determined to rule in real earnest ; who believed in no half-measures and was not to be trifled with or hood-winked ; who always kept in view the First Asaf Jah's injunction : " Keep each man in his proper bounds." The sceptics were astonished, the sycophants

confounded ; honest men found useful service, and the first round of the battle was won.

His Exalted Highness did not, however, allow his reforming zeal to outstrip discretion and forethought. He spared no pains in patiently studying every inch of the ground, like a good general ; and with his noted unerring instinct for picking out the best in everything, selected the right kind of men to counsel and assist him in putting Hyderabad's house in order. To change the metaphor, like a circumspect husbandman, he not only cleared the ground of weeds and tares, but sowed in due season the seeds of plenty and prosperity. His habit, formed early in life, to look into things himself, enabled him personally to supervise every operation and analyse the results. Consequently his labours were awarded a hundred-fold as they richly deserved to be.

The results of the Nizam's administration were so rapidly achieved and so striking, that when Lord Hardinge paid a Viceregal visit to Hyderabad in 1914, he heartily congratulated His Exalted Highness on his successful application of sound principles of statecraft, on his wise choice of high officers of State, on the progress and prosperity of Hyderabad. With characteristic modesty, in proposing the health of His Excellency on the occasion, the Nizam said :

“ What I wish to state is that I love my work, that I have followed the Viceroy's advice as regards looking into things myself, and that it is a source of great happiness to me to do all in my power to secure the welfare of the millions over whom it has pleased the Almighty to place me as a ruler.”

In the same year, Sir Stuart Fraser, the Resident, paid a well-deserved tribute in the course of a speech at the Nizam's birth-day dinner. The Resident declared that

the official history of Hyderabad had been one of steady progress in every department of Government, making the initiation of well-considered and wide-reading schemes for the development of the resources of the State, the opening up of communications and the improvement of the material and educational conditions of the people. "I have been much struck," remarked the Resident, "with the high qualifications of the men whom His Highness has gathered about him for the charge of the principal departments of the State, and it is safe to say that no ruler of Hyderabad has ever commanded the services of so carefully selected and so able a body of officials."

Having put Hyderabad on the high road of progress and prosperity within a remarkably short period, the Nizam was not content to rest on his laurels, but went on from well to better, making the goal of to-day the starting post of to-morrow. Indeed, his capacity for hard work, even at the present day, is phenomenal. Day in and day out, even in the hottest part of summer when Governments flit to the hills, he is to be found sitting at his desk in a corner of his favourite sitting room of the King Koti Palace, going through a regular routine, plodding through masses of files patiently. It is a matter of common knowledge that never has he up to now taken a real holiday, his only relaxation being his regular evening drive into the city. Referring to Sir Osman Ali Khan's unremitting labours, Sir Stuart Fraser once said :

"I am only stating what is well known to every one in Hyderabad when I say that he has established a reputation among those who work with him for the keen interest he displays, his official openness of mind and breadth of judgment which result in every scheme of importance for the welfare of his subjects receiving prompt attention at the hands of his Government."

The first three years of Osman Ali Pashah's rule were spent in clearing the decks, so to speak, for the operations that were to follow in the succeeding years. He left no avenue unexplored, no stone unturned, in order to better the administration and make the ship of State sea-worthy. At the end of this period, in 1914 to be precise, he took a momentous step. He dispensed with the services of a prime minister and became his own prime minister. The results proved beyond all doubt that the step was fully justified: Hyderabad, under the Nizam's personal rule became solvent, as it were, and emerged with full coffers. It was indeed a Herculean labour that he undertook, but His Exalted Highness threw himself heart and soul into the work and, at this period, worked far into the night when most of his subjects had sought relaxation or repose, illustrating the truth of the sentiment that,

“The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.”

But let the tale of these five laborious years, from which uprose a new era of progress and prosperity for the State, and to which Lord Irwin (now Viscount Halifax) referred to years afterwards in his Viceregal Banquet speech, and confessed that he himself would have shrunk from adopting such a bold course,—let the tale be told in Sir Osman Ali Khan's own words. In the course of his inaugural address in 1919 to the newly constituted Executive Council, one of the many landmarks of his reign, he said:

“Soon after my accession, my own scrutiny and examination of the administrative problems of my Dominions convinced me that the defects were ineradicable unless and until there was a structural change in the Government.

"After anxious and mature consideration, I decided to take up the heavy burden of direct administrative charge without the help of a prime minister.

"For five long years I have toiled hard and kept in view the measures that promised to secure the happiness and prosperity of my beloved subjects, in whose contentment and advancement my interest is paternal and abiding.

"I resolved after much reflection to give my Government a new constitution which would secure greater efficiency and ensure progressive force.

"The spread of education, the development of economic resources, the encouragement of commercial and industrial enterprise, the adoption of advanced sanitary and hygienic measures, the improvement of roads and communications and many other measures await solution."

The measures outlined by the Nizam, and numerous others that have been launched from time to time as the need arose, are receiving attention from the nation-building departments which are second to none in the whole of India in the matter of organisation and efficiency. The various works of public utility, civic and educational institutions, rural reconstruction centres, model villages, industrial establishments and agricultural and labour organisations, which embrace the districts as well as the capital, all bear eloquent testimony to the beneficent rule of Asaf Jah VII; all contribute their several pæans to the grand diapason which proclaims him as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, ruling princes of India; all bear out the observation once made by Sir Samuel Hoare, that Hyderabad stands in the forefront of Asiatic States.

"Despite the war," declared His Exalted Highness in the course of his speech proposing the health of His Excellency Lord Wavell at the Viceregal Banquet given

in honour of his visit to Hyderabad in December 1944, "the last few years have been years of prosperity and the annual income of the State has risen from nine to nearly seventeen crores of rupees. This has enabled large sums of money to be allotted for nation-building activities, such as expansion of higher, technical and general education, an aboriginal educational scheme, improvement in public health and medical facilities and the large sums to be kept in reserve for post-war requirements.

"A Central Industrial Research Laboratory and a College of Agriculture are being set up. In the Osmania University Departments of Technical Chemistry, Geography and Commerce have been opened, and provision has been made for opening a Department of Mining Engineering, and for providing new buildings for the Women's College. Under a five-year plan, free primary education is being provided in every village with 1,000 and more inhabitants."

As for Post-War Planning, Hyderabad is second to none of the States and the Provinces. A Post-War Planning Committee and Secretariat have been set up, and considerable progress has already been made in planning future economic, industrial, agricultural, public health and general development. "Hyderabad looks forward to an era of all-round progress," His Exalted Highness told Lord Wavell at the State Banquet, and added: "While we intend to co-operate in measures for the ordered and planned economic development of India, I believe that I can confidently rely on Your Excellency's Government in the same spirit, to give Hyderabad all help necessary for the successful execution of her plans."

The Nizam next referred to the agreement reached between his Government and the Government of Madras for the partial distribution of the waters of the Tunga-

bhadra, which would enable them to provide cheap electric power for wide areas, and irrigation facilities for the famine tracts of the Raichur Doab. This agreement took material shape when on February 28, 1945, which will go down as one of the shining Red-letter Days in the annals of the State, His Highness the Prince of Berar (who was deputed by his father for the purpose) and His Excellency Sir Arthur Hope, Governor of Madras, jointly inaugurated this long outstanding project which, when completed, will rank among the largest of its kind in the world.

The State is assuredly marching well abreast of the times, and the modernising process is nowhere more strikingly evident than in its adoption of the latest inventions of Science for the service of the public. The linking of Hyderabad with the direct Air Route between Madras and Karachi was but a preliminary step in the programme which aims at making the people air-minded. It was soon followed by the opening of the Hyderabad Air Port at Begumpet, which was ceremonially performed by Her Highness the Princess of Berar on November 4, 1936, and the formation of an Aero Club to encourage civil aviation. The State has realised also that wireless broadcasting is essential to the success of any scheme of rural reconstruction. The State Broadcasting Station, a few miles outside Hyderabad City, now broadcasts well-thought out programmes regularly, while the regional Radio Station at Aurangabad is one of the many such stations that are under contemplation.

Schemes for the supply of pure drinking water and of electricity and telephone service are working a radical change in the life of the rural population. In the matter of transport and communication facilities, Hyderabad is superbly provided with a net-work of roads and railways.

The purchase of the State Railway System is an epoch-making event, and the construction of the Kazipet-Bellarshah line, linking up Northern and Southern India in a Grand Trunk Route, is another outstanding achievement. The expansion of the Railway Bus Service over the length and breadth of the Dominions is an invaluable boon to the rural population. The work of agricultural demonstrations, industrial exhibitions, cattle shows, experimental farms, marketing of the country's produce on well-organised basis, all culminating in the Rural Reconstruction Movement, is forging ahead in all parts of the Dominions.

An eminent authority on Rural Reconstruction in India, Mr. F. L. Brayne, has very aptly remarked that the Indian villager "has fallen among thieves,—Dirt, Disease, Debt, Poverty, Waste, Ignorance—and they have stripped him and left him half-dead. Education is passing by on the other side with her priestly robe of literature and logarithms drawn tightly about her to avoid contamination." The Hyderabad villager has good reason to rejoice, for H. E. H. the Nizam has come to his rescue, like the Good Samaritan, with the healing oil of better farms, better health, and better homes. It is not for nothing that he has come to be known as the friend of the ryot and the labourer.

A well-drawn up scheme of Rural Reconstruction, controlled and operated by a Central Board with District and Taluq Councils, has been bettering the lot of the ryot and the labourer, and Rural Development Centres provide the necessary practical advice and impetus to the advancement of the rural population. All the nation-building departments play their respective parts and unite in organizing Welfare Weeks, Cattle Shows, Agricultural and Cottage Industries Demonstrations and Horticultural

and Poultry Shows, while the Co-operative Department takes a hand in encouraging thrift. How keenly the Nizam is alive to the vital importance of cottage industries for the welfare of the masses was made plainly evident when in opening the Cottage Industries Institute in the Mushirabad suburb of the city, he made the following appeal :

“ I have noticed that there is a tendency in all countries of the world to purchase home products even though they be not so good as imported articles. I do not see any reason why my State should not adopt that natural and world-wide tendency as far as it is reasonable. I draw the attention of my beloved subjects to it, while I commend the action of my Department of Commerce and Industries towards meeting the demand created by that tendency I notice everywhere.

“ When I myself do all I can to purchase and use goods made in my own State, and when I say, for instance, that Golconda Soap, made in Hyderabad, is used in all my palaces and is found good and cheap, I think my action itself will appeal to my subjects to do likewise. They love me and the country too well to require further inducement to follow my example in this respect.”

While emphasising the vital importance of small-scale or cottage industries, His Exalted Highness has not been slow in recognising the need for large-scale industries which, he once described as forming the ‘back-bone of the State.’ In addition to the Industrial Laboratory, which was established in 1917, and the creation of an Industrial Trust Fund with a corpus of one crore of rupees, an Industrial and Scientific Research Board was constituted in 1941. A Research Committee set up by the Board, is engaged mainly in the investigation of local available raw material for industrial purposes. Another

step forward was taken in 1944 when the Central Industrial Research Laboratory was established, in order to implement the new economic policy to the best advantage of the people. A large number of new industries covering a variety of products, have sprung up during His Exalted Highness' reign, and the total number of factories stood at 659 in 1944. Others are springing up rapidly and the State is being industrialised thoroughly.

Under the Post-War Plan, proposals are under consideration for the development of hydro-electric power as the basis of industrial as well as agricultural development. His Exalted Highness is particularly keen on electrification of industries, and there is an ambitious scheme to install an electric grid for the whole State. In fact, a new industrial township, which will be the 'Manchester' of Hyderabad, has been mapped out in the Godavary Valley. When it materialises, Hyderabad will be the first among the States and Provinces to possess such a city; the conception itself staggers the imagination.

Hyderabad abounds in mineral wealth of great variety, of which coal is by far the most important. The acquisition of a controlling interest in the Singareni Collieries Company in 1944 stands next in importance only to the acquisition of the State Railway system. It ensures the steady and successful implementation of the State's Post-War Industrial plans. The State's gold mining industry, which was suspended many years ago, has been restarted, and no pains have been spared in exploring and exploiting the valuable minerals which lie scattered in all directions. During the last seven years thousands of square miles of the country have been geologically surveyed and the mineral possibilities ascertained.

While on the subject of industries, it may be mentioned

that His Exalted Highness' solicitude for the 'under-dog' which he has expressed so frequently, and so strongly, embraces the labouring classes particularly. Adequate measures have consequently been adopted to regulate the terms, conditions and hours of work of labour and for the settlement of trade disputes, whereby humane treatment and a square deal have been ensured to workers. Not only have several Acts and Regulations been passed to safeguard the interests of Labour, but a Special Labour Officer has been appointed to see that justice is meted out and labour conditions ameliorated. Full attention has been paid to the question of wages, houses, dearness allowance and numerous other facilities. As a result there have been very few labour disputes in the State.

It has already been stated that Sir Osman Ali Khan has earned the appellation of 'The Friend of the Ryot.' How richly he deserves this epithet is borne out by the numerous measures and means that exist for providing relief and amenities for the ryot. Since the agriculturist is dependent wholly on the soil and irrigation for his livelihood, the several measures calculated to improve the soil and ensure a regular water supply, carried out by Government, are worthy of notice.

Almost the greatest achievement of the Nizam's Government in recent years is the protection given to the ryot by the construction of large irrigation works and the creation of a strong famine reserve. In addition to an expenditure of about eight crores of rupees on constructing, repairing and maintaining tanks, large and small irrigation schemes have been completed at a cost of nearly seven crores of rupees. Among these may be mentioned the Nizamsagar, the Palair, the Wyra, the Mahbubnagar, Fatchnagar and the Dindi Projects. The total area brought under irrigation is about four lakhs of acres.

There will be an immense addition to this acreage when the Tungabhadra Project, of which mention has already been made, is completed.

A further indirect aid to the agriculturist is the provision of facilities for transport, which has already been touched upon above. Roads and Railways constitute vital factors in the trade and prosperity of an agricultural country, and it is therefore noteworthy that almost —crores of rupees have been spent on the improvement of agricultural roads. Plans for the development of roads in conformity with the conclusion reached at the Nagpur Conference, have been prepared and are receiving final shape for the approval of Government. Similarly, the railway mileage has been extended by leaps and bounds and stood at 1,360 miles of open line in 1944. Side by side, the fleet of motor buses increased from 27 to 334 and the route mileage reached a maximum of 4,296 in 1944.

Through the agency of the Agricultural Department, which has extended its activities in all directions since 1938, field improvements have been effected by means of grants-in-aid, demonstrations farms and plots on cultivators' lands, and by means of experimental farms. To protect areas liable to scarcity owing to shortage of rainfall, research in 'dry farming' has been in progress for a number of years and the results are being given practical application on the lands of the ryots. Further, the economics of mixed farming are being studied, and a scheme to extend this work in all the four divisions of the State is under consideration of Government. Soil surveys and campaigns against plant pests and diseases, the supply of selected seeds specially evolved to suit local soils in co-operation with the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research; improved agricultural machinery

and implements, and grant of *taqavi* loans for the purchase of draught cattle, have all proved of immense assistance in increasing the outturn of the ryot.

Various reforms have been introduced to ensure a more efficient administration of revenue affairs and to remove disabilities of ryots. The Land Alienation Regulation, the Usurious Moneylenders Act, the Debt Conciliation Board, are some of the measures calculated to prevent the agriculturist falling into the clutches of debt and poverty. Cheap credit is provided through Land Mortgage Banks and Co-operative Societies, to redeem him from rapacious *sowcars*. In respect of taxation the Hyderabad ryot is much better off than his colleague in British India; in fact, apart from comparatively low rates of land revenue and local cess, he pays no other taxes or duties. The dates for the collection of revenue are altered to suit the peasants, the grazing cess being abolished as a measure of relief.

The 'Grow-more-Food' campaign, launched as a war measure to improve the State's food situation, has given a tremendous impetus in extending the acreage under cultivation and the production of food grains, and is sure to benefit the cultivator even after the war. Moreover, co-operative credit societies, spread throughout the State, afford him monetary relief and cheap credit. The Co-operative Movement has come to the fore during war days and is playing a role in the storage and distribution of food, which bids fair to become a permanent feature in the State's economy in the post-war period and after. Subsidiary occupations for ryots during the off-season have received adequate attention and have reduced unemployment in rural areas.

While much is being done to increase the earning capacity of the ryot, his social and cultural well-being is

also attended to. Medical and sanitation measures have been extended to the remotest corners of the Dominions at the cost of several lakhs of rupees and scourges of plague, cholera, malaria, small-pox and other epidemics have thereby been considerably mitigated. A special well-sinking department has provided the ryot with thousands of hygienically constructed wells, providing him with pure drinking water and eliminating guinea-worm and other water-borne diseases.

The vitally important work of organisation of medical relief in the City as well as in the rural areas, compares favourably with the best organisations of the kind in British India. A recent development is the passing of a Public Health Scheme to cover the whole State. Medical relief is to be brought to the very doors of the villagers by means of travelling dispensaries and even hospitals, fully equipped and staffed with doctors and nurses. A beginning has already been made with Mobile Units which travel from district to district and bring relief to sufferers from eye diseases, preventing blindness.

The Osmania General Hospital, occupying an imposing pile of buildings planned and constructed on the lines of St. Thomas's Hospital, London, is fully worthy of the capital of the Premier State in equipment and service, while the Victoria Zenana Hospital is a boon to women. His Exalted Highness' concern for the welfare of his people, which is the key-note of his reign, has been instrumental in revolutionising public health measures, and nearly Rs. 60 lakhs are being spent annually on public health and medical relief.

A modern Tuberculosis Sanitorium is yet another great step forward, as is the newly introduced measure for medical inspection of schools. In addition to this the State gives generous support to the Dichpali Leper Colony

and Hospital where a relentless campaign against this dread scourge is being carried on. In short, in this the most important branch of the public service, as in all other branches of public welfare, including child welfare and nutrition surveys, nothing has been left to chance and no half measures have been permitted.

The Nizam's love for the promotion and popularisation of indigenous systems of medicine has found practical expression in the establishment of a magnificent *Unani* Hospital in the capital city, with branches in the districts. Nearly five lakhs of rupees are annually spent on the Unani Medical Department which, besides the Hospital, runs a College. This is the only State in the world where there is an organised Unani Medical Service with a Hospital equipped and run on parallel lines to a first class allopathic hospital. No such hospital exists in British India or any other foreign country. The twin system of Ayurvedic Medicine obtains equal support from Government, and an annual grant of Rs. 35,000 has been provided for the expansion of the system and the setting up of a College.

Primary and Secondary education alone, which largely affect the ryot, cost the Government the phenomenal figure of Rs. 110 lakhs. Indeed, popular education of a type that raises the standard of living and improves the lives of his people, is one of the subjects that lies nearest to the Nizam's heart. He once expressed the belief the "education is the soul of every country: without it a country is a body without life."

The amelioration of the social and economic conditions of the people by means of popular education has always claimed the attention of His Exalted Highness in a special manner since he came to the *masnad*; his personal interest in the planning and advancement of the State's

educational policy has revitalised activities in the sphere of public instruction.

As his Dominions are mainly agricultural, the type of education favoured by the Ruler is that which teaches the making of better farms and better homes, the rules of health, the dignity of labour, and above all, the duty of service and citizenship. Neither money nor trouble is being spared to diffuse such an education. The Nizam recently took one more important step in this direction by instituting an enquiry into the educational system of the State in order to see if the present system can be further improved and made more suitable to the needs of the people. The late Dr. Mackenzie, an eminent educationist of all-India reputation, submitted a comprehensive report, and many of the recommendations contained therein have been accepted by Government.

Consequently a new system of education has been evolved and is being gradually put into operation. This system aims at reducing unemployment among the educated ; at weeding out those unfit for higher education and, providing for skilled training in craftsmanship so as to approximate as closely as possible to the economic needs of the various classes in the State. For this purpose it is divided into four stages, each with a definite aim. The Primary Stage, lasting five years, aims at providing the minimum of general education and the training required to ensure permanent literacy. Primary education is free, and has the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction throughout all the State and aided primary schools.

The Lower Secondary Stage of four years is a self-contained course of general education and constitutes a suitable foundation for the Higher Secondary Stage which occupies three years, followed by the University Stage.

In all the first three stages a vocational bias is given along with general education. Diversion into vocational and technical courses, according to the student's bent or capacity, is thus rendered possible at the end of each of these stages, and the scheme of vocational and technical education is devised in such a way as to provide for the absorption of such pupils in technical and vocational schools at any of these different stages. In short, it is a unique system which in itself constitutes one of the many landmarks of Sir Osman Ali Khan's reign.

The system described above depends for its success, of course, upon facilities for vocational and technical training. These facilities have accordingly been provided by the creation of the Department of Technical and Vocational Education, which has been placed under the control of the Director of Public Instruction in order to co-ordinate the two activities under the new system. His Exalted Highness engaged the services of an expert of European experience to draw up a scheme of Vocational and Technical Education, and this scheme with suitable modifications is being steadily implemented. The Osmania Technical College is a first grade college where electrical, mechanical and trade courses are conducted. It is thus already a polytechnic and it is intended to expand it.

Still another monument of His Exalted Highness' reign is the Central School of Arts and Crafts, which in its turn is to pave the way to the creation of an Ajanta School of Art and Sculpture. Various new courses of arts and crafts have been introduced into this institution, such as clay-modelling, colouring, pottery and commercial arts. It is also helping to revive the decadent cottage industries in the State on improved lines. Other vocational institutions provide for instruction in tailoring, wood-carving, dress-making and crochet work. Separate

institutions, conducted on similar lines, exist for the instruction of girls in these crafts. Under the Central School are twenty-four institutions for boys and girls, where technical and vocational training is given. A Central School of Commerce, which is shortly to be opened, is the latest development.

The most striking feature of Hyderabad's progress under the ægis of Asaf Jah VII, and one which may rightly be styled the crowning glory of his beneficent rule, is the already celebrated Osmania University. Happily named after its illustrious founder, it is destined to be an enduring monument to his incomparable patronage and love of learning and the arts. It has very appropriately been described by no less a national figure than Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, as "the true *Vidyapith*, the Swadeshi University of all India."

Started as a bold experiment, with the vernacular as the medium of instruction, the Osmania University has proved to be a splendid success. As the students of the University have themselves so aptly put it in the course of their address presented to the Nizam, when he opened the Arts College building in 1939, "some twenty years ago, when the whole of India was following an unnatural system of education, which still dominated the minds of the people and made them suspicious of the introduction of a more rational system, Your Exalted Highness' gracious *Firman* of April 26, 1917, suddenly opened new methods of imparting instruction and under your inspiring guidance, Hyderabad took the initial steps in seriously preparing for a new experiment in higher education.

"Under your noble patronage, steady progress has been maintained, and all discussion as to the nature and possibilities of the experiment have been put to rest, and the ideal has assumed a concrete form in the shape of the

Osmania University, which deserves to be followed by others.

“During these twenty years the University has made knowledge accessible in all its branches. It has made the acquisition of knowledge easier by following a natural system of education, and has also enriched the common language, which is the heritage we have received from our common culture and social contacts. Your Exalted Highness had always in view the ideal of having a highly cultured and organised people, and it is earnestly hoped that this ideal will be fulfilled by the Osmania University.”

Urdu, the medium of instruction employed in the Osmania University, has been the subject of bitter criticism and controversy, but as the language question has been made the tool of political and communal propaganda, the value of Urdu as a medium of instruction has remained unshaken. Mr. Rajagopalchari called it a paradox, but “none the less true that in a world dominated by prejudices, small differences (such as that between Urdu and Hindi) cause wider gulfs than very big differences.” He went on to declare that “the Osmania University is unique in all India in that the highest scientific education as well as the teaching of Humanities are done through an Indian language, the rich, joint product of Muslim and Hindu contact. . . . Yours is an achievement of which not only you but all India should be proud.”

“It is my earnest desire,” said His Exalted Highness in the course of his message to a recent session of the Indian Science Congress held here, “that it (the Osmania University) should cooperate with other Indian Universities in preparing the way for a scientific renaissance which will contribute to the material progress and prosperity of India, and at the same time secure for her an honoured

place in the ranks of the nations who lead in enlightenment and culture."

Mr. K. M. Panikkar, in his Oxford Pamphlet on the Indian States, speaks of the Osmania University as "the great experiment of a modern university teaching in an Indian language." This was true in the earlier stages, but the experimental stage has been passed long ago, and the University has attained its majority and taken firm root in the cultural life of the people. But Mr. Panikkar's general observations that the Indian States "have not held back from any movement for the uplift of the country or the betterment of the Indian people," and that "the Princes and their people have never put any barrier between themselves and their brethren in British India in matters affecting their common welfare," are particularly applicable to Hyderabad and its Ruler. Not only the passages quoted in the preceding paragraph, but many other pronouncements of the Nizam substantiate the fact that His Exalted Highness' breadth of vision and cultural outlook embrace the whole of India, and that he thinks in terms of India as a whole and not as an isolationist. Indeed, he considers his University to be the custodian of the Mogul tradition of Hindu-Muslim unity and their partnership in the secular field of citizenship; it is his ambition that his beacon which he has kindled in Hyderabad should diffuse the light of Akbar the Great all over India.

It has rightly been claimed that the establishment of the Osmania University has not only brought the average Hyderabadi closer to all India, by extending his vision beyond the areas of local languages and traditions, but has maintained, as far as is necessary, contacts with the world of modern thought outside. "You are the makers of traditions which I hope and pray succeeding generations

of Hyderabadis will look upon with pride and affection," declared the late Sir Akbar Hydari at a Convocation of the University, and added: "You are blazing a trail which never has been blazed before in India, and you are the architects who will make or mar the new concept of education which the Osmania University has furnished to India."

Established by Charter in 1918, the Osmania University although it imparts instruction in all subjects through the medium of Urdu or Hindustani, has English as a compulsory language in all classes up to the B.A. and B.Sc. Examinations. It maintains five Intermediate Colleges, and a First Grade College for Women, which teaches up to the M.A. and M.Sc. stages. Literacy among women, which had been at a very low ebb until the 'Maker of Modern Hyderabad' came into power, has made very appreciable strides, and Hyderabad women are rapidly taking their place alongside their men folk in the march of progress.

Without entering into detail, it may be stated that the Osmania University's activities are on a par with those of the most advanced seats of learning, and in some respects it is leading in one direction and another. Original research is particularly encouraged among the students and staff, and the public is regularly served by means of extension lectures. There are very few All-India cultural bodies that have not been invited to hold their annual conferences in Hyderabad under the auspices of the Osmania University.

An important administrative change, made in 1944, was the abolition of the post of Pro-Vice Chancellor, and the appointment of a whole-time Vice-Chancellor. The Chancellorship is held by the President of the State Executive Council. The University has conferred Honorary

Degrees on various personages eminent in the national life of India, very befittingly beginning with its illustrious founder upon whom it conferred the unique Honorary Degree of *Sultan-ul-Uloom*, or the 'Prince of Learning.'

Fifteen of the eighteen Universities in India have recognised the Degrees and Certificates of the Osmania University. The Government of India and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, Sheffield and Manchester have also recognised the examinations of the University. The B.E. Degree has been recognised by the Medical Council of India. The University runs a research journal of its own and an institute of advanced research in Mathematics and Science exists. The annual budget of the University is roughly Rs. 25 lakhs.

Imposing buildings, worthy of housing such a University, are now in course of construction, of which the Arts College was completed in 1989. In fact, a University Town is springing up in a salubrious and picturesque suburb of the City known as Adikmet, at a cost of over two crores of rupees. "In boldness of conception and vision, architectural and academic," observed the late Dr. A. H. Mackenzie, an eminent educationist and its first Pro-Vice-Chancellor, "the scheme fires the imagination; it provides facilities for the training of mind and body, unequalled in India and, I believe, unsurpassed in any country in the world." It has become one of the show-places of Hyderabad.

The opening ceremony of the magnificent Arts College, the first of the buildings of the University Town to be completed, was performed by His Exalted Highness, who had laid its foundation-stone, on December 4, 1989. Replying to the address presented to him on the occasion, His Exalted Highness said :

"I regard the Osmania University as marking a great

achievement of my period of rule ; and this building, which in beauty of design, magnificence and splendour, has not a rival in India, will be a glorious monument to it. . . . Like Urdu, the architecture of this building represents a blending of the Hindu and Muslim styles and the art and culture of both these races are reflected in the pillars and traceries and carvings on the doors and walls. Thus, this building symbolises the close contacts and friendly relations subsisting for centuries between the various classes of my subjects as a result of which the people of my State have always in the past lived in harmony with one another. I therefore deem it my duty, and an expression of my love for my people to maintain those relations between them. The Osmania University should not only be the repository of Hyderabad's best traditions, a model of its high culture ; it should also aim at broad-mindedness and mutual toleration and unity among the students, for in that ideal lies the well-being and the prosperity of the State."

Alongside this intellectual awakening, there has been an increasing regard shown for physical culture, as evidenced by the activity of the Department of Physical Education, the Scout and Girl Guide organisations and the educational excursions conducted by the different institutions, and also the popularity of athletic sports and games all over the country. The social renaissance and growing corporate life of the peoples is manifesting itself in the convening of conferences, the formation of societies and journalistic activities.

The new awakening has had its influence on the women-folk as well, who are now trying to betake themselves, in a spirit of social service, to suitable paths of public activity. Quite a large number of women's clubs and associations are in existence to-day in the city and in the

districts, affording opportunities to them of educational and social service. The Hyderabad State Women's Association for Educational and Social Advancement, which is affiliated to the All-India body of that name, is an outstanding case in point.

The women of the State are singularly fortunate in having stalwart leaders in the persons of Her Highness the Princess of Berar and Princess Niloufer, who have identified themselves with the women of the State in a practical manner, and are leading them onward to a glorious future. His Exalted Highness himself has recognised the place of women in the future polity of the State when he recommended the new Reforms Scheme "to women with whom rests in such a large measure the task of moulding a nation."

On being installed on the *masnad* left vacant by the death of his revered father, Nawab Sir Mahbub Ali Khan Bahadur, his son Nawab Sir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur declared in the course of his reply to the Resident's speech on the occasion : " I promise you that in every way I will do my best to do good to my people and my country by following in the footsteps of my father, and I shall always be loyal to the British Government."

Again, seventeen years later, replying to an address presented by the Hyderabad Municipality and the public, after his return from Delhi in November 1928, the Nizam said : " I do not wish to go into details regarding the points touched upon in the address ; all I need say is that the prosperity and well-being of my people have always been, and shall always be, the goal I keep in view.

" For the bond that unites the ruler and the ruled can never be severed ; it is a natural bond, the very foundation of culture and progress, upon which rests the entire social fabric of the State.

"I have great pleasure in announcing to my subjects that the historic friendly relations subsisting between the British Government and the House of Asaf Jah for over a century, so productive of important results in Indian history, are, by the grace of God, becoming more and more cordial day by day, and my visit to Delhi has provided one more proof of this fact."

Solicitude for the welfare and prosperity of his own people and loyalty to the British Crown—these have ever been the mainsprings of the Nizam's enlightened rule and continue to be so. They are reflected in all his actions as well as his public utterances and *Firmans* from his accession to the present day. These utterances, so instinct with sincerity, patriotism and determination, and yet so modest and simple, are truly characteristic of the man whose plain living and high thinking, combined with the inflexible resolve to persevere until he has accomplished what he has undertaken, have drawn the hearts of his people into a closer bonds of sympathy and cooperation with their ruler; have impelled them to look upon him as the true embodiment of the ideal of sovereignty; have won the admiration of public-spirited men in India and abroad. Needless to say, it is to this patriotism, this devotion and this assiduity that Hyderabad owes the present high position she has come to occupy among progressive States.

The bond that unites the Nizam to his people is composed of many strong strands, such as the complete freedom and protection of worship, equal opportunities for all and even-handed justice, preservation of all monuments whether belonging to Hindus or Muslims, Jains or Buddhists, Christians or Parsis, and, above all, wide sympathy and solicitude for the lowliest of the lowly. His Exalted Highness once boldly proclaimed his religious

outlook in the following stirring words, which have since come to be known as the "Asifia Creed":

"Whatever may be the religion of my House and my own personal beliefs, I am, as a ruler, the follower of another religion as well, which must be characterised as '*love towards all*'; because under me live people of different faiths and different communities and the protection of their houses of worship has for long been part of the Constitution of my State.

"I do not desire, therefore, to injure with narrow-mindedness the susceptibilities of any community or faith, or to distort the practice of my own religion in such a manner as to earn the title of a bigot. It has throughout been my principle and that of my forefathers to look upon all religions without difference or distinction, and to cause no weakening of our rule by interference in the practice of any religion.

"In my capacity of a ruler, I consider myself to be without any religion, not in the sense of being an atheist, but in the sense of being without bias as a ruler for or against any particular religion or community. In that faith I and my forefathers have taken just pride and will continue to do so, and I trust that my descendants will also, God willing, follow the same example."

It seems pertinent to pause a moment here, and ask if this can be the avowed creed of a ruler who is 'a staunch and fanatic Muslim,' who has imbibed the 'idealism of Aurangzeb' and is 'following in the footsteps of that august monarch,' as Sir Osman Ali Khan has actually been represented to be by certain maligners and traducers, all whose knowledge of him is confined to the fact that he is a Muslim and the ruler of the Nizam's Dominions? The Nizam's confession, quoted above, completely explains the existence, on solid foundations, of the Nizam's

Dominions to-day, which would not certainly have been the case if the Nizam's had followed in the footsteps of Aurangzeb.

However this may be, facts speak louder than words, and it is an incontrovertible fact that there exists in Hyderabad an Ecclesiastical Department that controls and safeguards the interests as well as the places of worship of all religions without any distinction or discrimination. The Department does not interfere in religious performances and ceremonies, except where innovations in the public observance of such ceremonies are likely to endanger the public peace. The Department's main function is to be the channel for the Nizam's truly magnificent grants to the thousands of religious institutions and the various religious bodies that are fortunate to be situated in his territories, and in one case at least, outside them.

Apart from Churches, there are in the Nizam's Dominions nearly 50,000 religious institutions, of which 34,509 belong to Hindus and 14,777 to Muslims. Included in this category are 32,000 temples and 6,000 mosques. Cash grants of the value of Rs. 1,12,870 are given annually to Hindu religious bodies from the coffers of Government. Similarly, Rs. 7,87,938 (including the aid given to the people in India and the Hedjaz) are given to Muslim religious bodies, while the Churches, of various denominations, receive Rs. 18,829.

Besides the above, 11,355 Hindu and 5,024 Muslim religious institutions receive grants of Rs. 3,10,946, and Rs. 2,51,267 respectively. Over and above this, there are big *jagirs* (lands) endowed both for Hindu and Muslim institutions; for instance, the Sitaram Bagh Temple in Hyderabad and the Mahur Temple in Adilabad with an annual income of Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 60,000 respectively.

Again, the Sikh Gurudwara at Nander, next in importance as a place of pilgrimage only to the Golden Temple at Amritsar, enjoys an income of Rs. 23,568 annually from grants made by the State. In short, the majority of temples in the State receive grants. Even the Bhadrachellam Temple, situated outside the State in the Madras Presidency, which has an interesting history of its own, receives an annual grant of Rs. 20,000.

But the unique feature of the Nizam's Ecclesiastical Department, which seems incredible but is nevertheless true, is that in the villages, Patels and Patwaris—ninety per cent. of whom are Hindus—act as ecclesiastical officers in their respective jurisdictions ; and, what's more remarkable, 125 Muslim institutions, such as mosques and tombs, are managed by Hindus who receive cash grants from Government in return for their services.

Another strand of the bond uniting the ruler with the ruled consists of the preservation and conservation of ancient monuments and antiquities which abound in the Nizam's Dominions. But for His Exalted Highness' catholic outlook, many of these relics of ancient culture and art, including the priceless Ajanta Frescoes, would have long ago perished and have been lost to posterity. Neither money nor trouble has been spared in preserving these variegated antiquities and unearthing ancient cities from the dust in which they lay buried for centuries. All this has been accomplished through the State's Archæological Department, to the work of which, in respect of the Ajanta Frescoes alone, Dr. Krishna, the Mysore Archæologist, has paid the following tribute :

“ The conservation of the Ajanta paintings by the Nizam's Government, who expended money liberally in engaging the services of the greatest Italian experts, ranks as one of the greatest achievements of archæology

not only in India but in the world. That these priceless treasures of Buddhistic generations were preserved was solely due to the generous patronage of His Exalted Highness, the amount of money spent on their conservation being no less than Rs. 80 lakhs."

Take yet another strand of the Nizam's love for his people : the amelioration of the condition of the so-called 'Untouchables' or Depressed Classes who, thanks to the Nizam's befriending them in a special manner, do not feel depressed any more. Replying to the address presented to him by the Depressed Classes on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee in 1937, His Exalted Highness declared :

" I do not regard any community as low or untouchable, so long as it bears good character. In fact, I regard all human beings as equal. In view of their poverty and ignorance the *Adi Hindus* deserve greater attention and sympathy of my Government, particularly because their number (85 lakhs) is fairly large in my Dominions. I am glad to learn that steps are being taken to give them education. I hope that my Government will devote special attention to their education and general well-being, so that this community might also come to be reckoned among the advanced communities of my Dominions."

In pursuance of these commands, the Depressed Classes are given equal opportunities for educational, economic and social betterment alongside of other communities. Special attention continues to be paid to their needs and aspirations, and the unjust and oppressive system of exacting labour from certain depressed classes in rural areas has been abolished together with other oppressive systems of labour contracts known as *Baghela*. Lands are granted to the landless agricultural labourers of this community, and special schools of various types have

been opened for them. No discrimination of any sort is made against these people in the matter of their entry into Government service, and several hold suitable places in the administrative machinery. They have been given due consideration in the new Reforms Scheme, and their representatives in the proposed Legislative Assembly will have ample opportunities, in conference with others, to introduce suitable bills for effecting such social reforms as they desire.

In a message to the recent All-India Law Conference held in Hyderabad, His Exalted Highness has emphasised the sanctity of the 'reign of law.' The system of judicial administration in the State is in many ways in advance of that of British India. As far back as 1921 His Exalted Highness took a momentous step in effecting the separation of judicial from executive functions. In 1926 he granted his High Court a Charter and 1933 saw the introduction of the Jury System.

Fiat Justitia in his watchword, and none so poor among his subjects who do not obtain even-handed justice. To make this assurance doubly sure, he has instituted an Anti-corruption Drive and has appointed an Inspecting Officer. His Judicial Committee corresponds to that of the King's Privy Council, and his sense of justice is such that he did not hesitate to order the findings of a Special Tribunal, that had been appointed by him, to be carried out, although they involved the exhumation of a Muslim Saint's remains from the precincts of the Sikh Gurudwara at Nanded.

The strongest and most brilliant strand he has so far woven in the bond that unites the ruler and the ruled, is undoubtedly the grant of a New Constitution to his people, which is a landmark of his reign second only to the institution of the State Executive Council in 1919.

The latter completed the first twenty-five years of its existence in May 1944 when the President and Members submitted an *Arzdasht* (Memorial) to His Exalted Highness who, replying to it, said :

“ God be praised that the Executive Council which I had established for the good Government and prosperity of my Dominions, has successfully completed the first twenty-five years of its existence. . . . I am glad that during this period the President and Members of the Council who have at once time held office, or who are now in office, have always regarded loyalty to the Ruler and the State as their first duty and have discharged their responsibilities to the best of their ability. I hope that the standard of efficiency and attainments of the Council will keep on rising higher and higher, and that my Administration will show further progress in all directions.” His Exalted Highness then went on to refer to the New Constitution and declared :

“ I hold my subjects very dear and have at heart their prosperity and advancement. It is, therefore, incumbent on my Government to put into effect as quickly as possible all measures necessary for the progress and welfare of the people under my guidance, which I shall give from time to time.

“ I trust that the new expanded Legislative Assembly will be of material assistance to my Government by keeping them in touch with public opinion on matters of public importance, and will also help to knit closer together the ties uniting my people with my Government. After the war, it will be necessary for me to give consideration also to the problems of the Executive Council and to bring about such changes in that body as may be necessary.”

The Nizam who, like His Majesty the King, refers all

matters to Divine Providence, ends his reply on a note of thanksgiving, and prayer for the preservation of his State and its advance on the path of progress; for he implicitly believes that 'unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that build it.'

It was in July 1939 that the plan of a reformed constitution for the State, the quick implementation of which the Nizam has so strongly emphasised above, was announced. The New Constitution is based for the most part on the recommendations of a predominantly non-official Committee. This Committee was required to 'investigate and report on all suitable measures for the more effective association of the different interests in the State with the Government, whereby the latter may be placed in continuous possession of their needs and desires.' In other words, to help to knit closer together the ties uniting his people to the Ruler and his Government.

During the period of nearly six years which have elapsed since then, not only have a large number of preliminaries entailed in the actual implementation of the Reforms Scheme been completed, but a good part of the Constitution has been carried into effect. The first step in this direction was taken three years ago when the annual District Conferences were initiated. These are in the nature of institutional agencies designed to serve as 'forums' for the ventilation of local needs. Another step forward was the inauguration of the Statutory Advisory Committees on Finance, Agriculture, Industries, Education, Public Health, Hindu and Muslim Religious Endowments, Religious Affairs and Labour. In the words of His Exalted Highness himself who gave an account of the progress made with the Constitutional Reforms to Lord Wavell:

"I have also given my assent to certain constitutional

laws or *A'ins*, designed to establish throughout my Dominions a net-work of local bodies, great and small, with non-official majorities. In pursuance of these *A'ins* my Government have already brought into being District Boards for fifteen districts, some Jagir Boards and large numbers of Municipal Committees and Town Committees, and several Village *Panchayats*. The laws and rules for the proposed reformed Legislature are under active preparation. All these measures will, I trust, concluded the Nizam, "do much to fulfil my desire that the closer association thus effected between my Government, my officers and my people, will bring out still more the real identity of interests which exists between them."

This piecemeal implementation of the Reforms has been necessitated by the stupendous nature of preliminary work connected with each of the component parts of the New Constitution. A separate Secretariat has been constituted to speed up the implementation of the remaining parts of the Scheme, the basic conception of which has been described by the Reforms Committee, which worked under the chairmanship of Dewan Bahadur S. Aravamudu Iyengar, as follows :

"The Head of the State represents the people directly in his own person, and his connection with them, therefore, is more natural and abiding than that of any passing elected representatives." It may here be remarked in passing that this principle is analogous to that enunciated by John Stuart Mill in his essay on 'Representative Government,' where he says that "the direct influence of public measures on each legislator is so small that he neglects these for local interests, where strong influence is brought to bear on him," whereas, "the monarch is, or should be, strictly impersonal, and above all local, as above all selfish, interests." And, as the framers of the

Scheme have pointed out, "he is both the supreme head of the State and the embodiment of his 'people's sovereignty.' Hence it is that, in such a polity, the Head of the State not merely retains the power to confirm or veto any piece of legislation, but also enjoys a special prerogative to make and unmake his executive or change the machinery of Government through which he meets the growing needs of the people. Such a sovereignty forms the basis on which our Constitution rests and has to be preserved."

Perhaps the most striking proposal made by the **Iyengar Reforms Committee**, and accepted by Government, is that the basis of representation should be functional and not territorial, with joint electorates. This represents a daring departure from the general system of representation obtaining in British India and in other Indian States. This is one more proof that Hyderabad is not a blind imitator of existing models, but has many daring departures to its credit. It has given the lead to the rest of India in one direction and another. The **Osmania University**, the **Co-ordination of Rail, Road and Air Services**, and the separation of the **Judiciary** from the **Executive**, are noteworthy cases in point. **Mr. Panikkar** has very felicitously described the Indian States as 'laboratories of social experiment . . . endeavouring in every way to contribute to the general welfare of India.' In this respect Hyderabad is, in the words of an eminent British Indian, "from every point of view, in the van of substantial moral and material progress in India, and may be regarded as one of its Flag-bearing States."

In the domain of town-planning and improvement of civic life, Hyderabad has notable achievements to its credit. The ancient city, which is a legacy of the **Qut'b Shahi Kings**, once known as **Bhagyanagar**, has all the

defects of such cities when judged by modern standards. These defects are steadily, though slowly, disappearing and a healthier and more beautiful city is emerging, thanks to the remodelling scheme which is being systematically pursued by the City Improvement Board. The Nizam's interest in town-planning has led him to appoint his second son, Walashan Prince Muazzam Jah Bahadur, President of the Board.

Slums and congested areas are giving place to hygienically constructed dwellings and well-laid out play-grounds and children's parks; and narrow and tortuous streets and lanes of the old city are being widened and realigned with ornamental arcades. The miles and miles of cement and asphalt roads of Hyderabad never fail to move visitors to admiration and appreciation. One of these is no less a person than His Excellency the Governor of the Central Provinces, who has had vast experience of town planning in Calcutta. Even a Member of the Central Housing Committee set up by the British Government, Mr. B. S. Townroe, has observed :

"The inspiring progress of the Hyderabad City Improvement Board, with General Walashan Prince Muazzam Jah Bahadur, the second son of His Exalted Highness the Nizam as its President, proves what can be done by wise administration, generous financial help, and above all when hard and courageous thinking is translated into action."

Not only has the City been given a most modern system of pure water-supply by damming up a river which once flooded it and destroyed life and property, and an underground system of drainage and better lighting, but its suburbs have been developed into residential colonies for the poor as well as the wealthy citizens. Up to the time of penning this, the Board has built 4,000 houses for

the poor and middle classes and thus provided homes for 20,000 persons.

If Mr. Beverley Nichols, who visited the City about two years ago had given something more than a passing glance through the window of his car as it went whizzing by, he would have seen much more than 'palaces as common as tobacco kiosks in Paris.' But this notoriously superficial observer and spinner of yarns need not be taken seriously; and his remarks about Hyderabad and its Ruler are not worth the paper they are printed on.

This account of Hyderabad town-planning would be incomplete without a mention of the latest proposal in the shape of a Master Plan for a Greater Hyderabad, which is essentially regional in character, and covers the City and its suburbs, which are eighty square miles in extent. The construction of a Serpentine in the reach of the Musi river which passes through the civic centre, with provision for boating and aquatic sports, is an idea that holds the fancy. While public health is undoubtedly the first consideration of the town-planners, the æsthetic side is also being steadily kept in view. The town-planning is by no means to be confined to the capital city; the mofussil towns are to have their share of attention, and a beginning has already been made in this direction.

His Exalted Highness' artistic temperament has also found expression in his love of architecture, and in this respect he bears comparison with some of the Grand Moghuls. During his reign, the City and suburbs have been adorned with a large number of imposing buildings, and more are under construction. As examples of these, the Osmania Arts College, the High Court buildings, the Osmania Hospital, the Public Library, the City College and several others stand out prominently. In all these buildings due regard has been paid to the old architectural

styles of Hyderabad, but at the same time, modern ventilation and lighting, and building materials, such as cement and steel, have been liberally utilised, and up-to-date principles of hygiene and comfort duly observed. The buildings of the Osmania University, of which the completed Arts College is a fine example, will add a new chapter to the history of Deccani architecture. No visitor to Hyderabad in recent years was more impressed with the transformation wrought in the lay-out of Hyderabad than His Excellency Lord Wavell who remarked :

“ Our first impression of your fine capital has not belied our expectations, and those responsible for its development are to be congratulated on the success they have achieved in creating a modern town of magnificent, wide thoroughfares and stately buildings out of an old Moghul City, without destroying the evidences of its historic past.”

It has been stated in the preceding pages that next to his solicitude for the welfare and prosperity of his own people, is his deep-rooted sentiment of loyalty to the British Crown. It is recorded of one of his predecessors that when he lay dying he solemnly enjoined it on his heir-apparent never to swerve as much as a hair's breadth from his loyalty to the British Government. It was on this Nizam, who stood unshaken in his loyalty to the British during the Indian Mutiny, that the title of 'Faithful Ally of the British Government' was first conferred, and from whom the Berars and some other territories were taken away.

By deeds as well as by words, the present holder of that title has shown that he values it above all his other titles, and takes the greatest pride in it. It is a title that truly reflects the intense traditional loyalty of the House of Asaf Jah, which was once tested in the crucible of the

Indian Mutiny and found to be pure gold. "If the Nizam goes, all is lost," telegraphed the Governor of Bombay to the Resident at the Nizam's Court at a moment when the future of the British Raj in India lay trembling in the balance. The Nizam stood unshaken, firm as his own rock of Golconda, and all was saved. Similarly, the father of the present ruler was the first among Indian Princes to volunteer his personal services as well as to place the resource of his Dominions at the disposal of the British Government when a crisis arose on the North-Western Frontier of India. He was also the first to raise the Imperial Service Troops for the defence of the Empire.

It was to this loyalty and friendship His Exalted Highness alluded when he spoke with undisguised pleasure to his people on his return from Delhi in 1928, of "the historic friendly relations, so productive of results in Indian history." On another occasion he declared that ever since the dawn of British rule in India an unbroken record of alliance and friendship with his House had been maintained. It has indeed always been his favourite theme on all public occasions, and one which he has all along unfailingly translated into magnificent actions whenever the need arose. His splendid contributions in men and money during the last World War, and his outspoken manifestoes in times of grave political crises testify abundantly to this fact. As he himself once said : "In more than one crisis the sword of an Asaf Jah has been drawn in the defence and the honour and integrity of the British Empire."

The Nizams have undoubtedly played a prominent part as Empire Builders. The first of these occasions was when the Yellow Flag of Hyderabad floated side by side with the Union Jack over the ramparts of Seringapatam when

that fortress fell. Then followed the wars with the Mahratta power, in the course of which the Imperial Government's forces fought shoulder to shoulder with those of the Nizam. Next came the Great Indian Mutiny during which the loyalty of the Nizam, as stated already, saved the British Raj.

Coming down to recent times, Hyderabad troops fought side by side with the British Forces in Palestine. This was indeed an acid test, as Turkey, the foremost Muslim Power in the world entered into the conflict on the enemy side, but His Exalted Highness, the Premier Muslim Prince in India, never faltered or hesitated for a moment in throwing in all his weight on the British side and fully living up to his dynastic tradition. His Majesty King George V was prompt in handsomely recognising the Nizam's services, as the following extract from the letter which he wrote from Buckingham Palace on January 24, 1918, reveals :

" It gives me great satisfaction to show my appreciation of the eminent services which you have rendered to my Empire during the War by conferring upon you the special style of 'Exalted Highness,' and by confirming to you formally the honourable title of 'Faithful Ally of the British Government' by which Your Exalted Highness and your predecessors have long emphasised your loyalty to my ancestors and myself."

Once again the Nizam has drawn his sword in the defence of civilization and the British Empire, and has promptly placed all the resources of his Dominions at the disposal of His Majesty the King Emperor. Soon after the declaration of war on Hitlerism by Great Britain, His Exalted Highness gave the lead to the people of India, as well as to his own people, by issuing a spirit-

stirring manifesto on September 7, 1939, containing the following passages :

“ I informed the Viceroy that just as my ancestors had come to the assistance of the British Government during crises in the past, and just as I myself had tried to be of service in every way I could during the previous war of 1914, I was prepared, in exactly the same way, to do so again ; and that I considered this to be my duty in order that the true meaning and significance of the designation of ‘ Faithful Ally,’ given to my House by the British Government, might remain established before the eyes of the world.

“ Apart from this, I appeal to all the people of India, and more especially the Muslims, to sink their differences, great and small, if any ; for this is not the time to give them prominence ; and having laid them aside, to do everything in their power to be of assistance to the British Government, as they had been during the last war, and had thereby given proof of their loyalty ; so that the great danger threatening the British Empire, which has arisen in Europe and whose dire effects may possibly be felt even in India, may be effectively met.

“ For, I have no hesitation at all in saying that the benign shadow of the British Government, under which India has lived for a long time past, is an unrivalled blessing to this country, and none can deny it ; and more especially is the existence of the Indian States bound up with the Government.

“ To sum up, we should reflect deeply as to how we can best meet this danger in order that we may, after the attainment of complete victory, live once more in comfort and security. God willing, the righteous cause which the British Government espoused will surely triumph ; for it

is a well-known truism that God helps those whose intentions are righteous."

His Exalted Highness quickly followed up this manifesto, which influenced the Muslims all over India in no small measure to lend their support to the British Government, with substantial contributions in men, money and material. He outlined Hyderabad's War Effort in the course of his speech at the State Banquet to His Excellency the Viceroy on December 10, 1944, as follows :

"Hyderabad has always valued the British connection as a guarantee of peace and tranquillity in India, and never more so than at a time when the safety of the country is being threatened by a powerful and ruthless enemy. It is for this reason, apart from considerations of sentiment, that I have always taken a personal pride in the title of 'Faithful Ally' bestowed upon me by the King-Emperor, and have tried to live up to its ideals.

"Hyderabad, from the very beginning of the war, mobilised all its resources and placed them unreservedly at the disposal of His Majesty the King-Emperor.

"I can speak with pride of the expansion of my Army, which has almost been doubled since the outbreak of the war, and of the modernization of all its units. There are now eight units serving under the Crown, of which three have been in action against the enemy ; all except three of these units are serving outside India and another is shortly to go overseas. Of the units serving within the Dominions the most important are the three Training Centres for Artillery, Mechanised Cavalry and Infantry. All three are organised and equipped on the same up-to-date lines as the similar Training Centres of the Indian Army.

"Nor have we omitted to take thought for the resettlement of these soldiers in civil life after the War. Rupees

ten lakhs have been provided in the current year's budget for this purpose and further sums will be made available in subsequent years as the Resettlement Committee extend their plans.

“My private contributions to the War amounted to £60,000 for equipping a Fighter Air Squadron and Rs. 7 lakhs for the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund. Direct and indirect war expenditure and contributions by my Government amount to Rs. 6 crores 31 lakhs.

“My Government did not accept the Grant-in-Aid offered by the Government of India to my State to meet the increased expenditure of my troops serving in various theatres of war outside Hyderabad, as I felt, as a ‘Faithful Ally,’ that my Dominions should meet the whole of this additional expenditure.

“My Government also donated nearly Rs. 52½ lakhs to the British Air Ministry and the British Admiralty for the Hyderabad R.A.F. Squadrons and for the purchase of a Corvette named ‘Hyderabad’ and presented the Basset Trawler H.M.I.S. ‘Berar’ to the Royal Indian Navy.

“Hyderabad has given full cooperation in fighting inflation; and, apart from other steps taken, I am glad to say that my Government have been able so far to invest over fifty crores of rupees in various Defence and other Loans of the Government of India. The public of Hyderabad have also contributed over twenty-four lakhs of rupees to the Hyderabad War Purposes Fund, and provided one Squadron for the R.A.F. at a cost of another twenty-four lakhs.

“The industrial resources of the State were mobilised, and as a result of our representation at the Eastern Group Conference—so wisely convened through the foresight of your predecessor—new industries and workshops were

created to supply some of those essential requirements which were so desperately needed.

"All these resources were freely placed at the disposal of the Supply and Army Departments for War purposes. The Technical, Educational and other institutions of my Dominions were also used unreservedly for war service and a large number of technicians have been trained. A number of young men has also been trained for the Civil Air Reserve Corps."

His Exalted Highness also gave an account of the role being played by the State Railways in handling heavy military traffic, the loan of locomotives and rolling stock and aircraft to assist in the defence of the country, the contributions of the Railway Workshops in the manufacture of armament parts, the training of driver-mechanics and ground engineers, and the construction of aerodromes and military buildings. In short, the Nizam rightly claimed that Hyderabad had given of its best in men and material, in addition to crores of rupees.

"In this fight against totalitarian domination," said the Viceroy, appreciating Hyderabad's war effort, "Your Exalted Highness has never faltered even in the darkest days, and my distinguished predecessor has already placed on record his deep appreciation of the part played by Your Exalted Highness, not only in mobilising to the utmost for the prosecution of the war all the resources of this great State, but also in inspiring your people with belief in the justice of the Allied cause and confidence in its eventual triumph."

Hyderabad's war effort has received the highest encomiums from personages like H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, when he visited Hyderabad in 1943, from H.E. the Commander-in-Chief, who visited the State

subsequently, and, above all, from one of the 'Big Three,' namely, Mr. Winston Churchill.

His Royal Highness paid a handsome tribute to the splendid quality of Hyderabad Troops, several of whom had won gallantry awards, referred to Hyderabad's contributions to India's war effort as magnificent, and said that all this had proved once more than the 'proud title of Faithful Ally' had been most richly deserved by His Exalted Highness.

Lord Auchinleck declared that he was very sensible of what 'great things have been done in the Allied cause by the State of Hyderabad,' and that without the Hyderabad troops they would have found it difficult to carry on their task, while Mr. Churchill, replying to a telegram of congratulation sent to him by the Hyderabad Defence Council on the successful opening of the Second Front, said :

"His Exalted Highness has been with the Allies throughout the fluctuations of this arduous struggle with generous help in men, money and material. His troops have done sterling service in Malaya and the Middle East, and the Squadron which bears Hyderabad's name has shared in the achievement of the Royal Air Force."

Of a truth, His Exalted Highness has spared no effort, and continues to spare no effort, to aid the Allied cause, which he has avowed to be his own cause, by every possible means in his power. He even broadcast an inspiring message of courage and hope to Indian prisoners of war in Japanese hands, telling them that he would be the first to welcome them home when victory was achieved. His praise is not limited only to his own troops, but, as he so well put it, to the "gallant sons of India who have acquitted themselves so nobly and courageously in the different theatres of war."

No picture of Hyderabad's War Effort can be complete

without a mention of the superb contributions of Hyderabad women. Under the inspiring leadership of Her Highness the Princess of Berar, and her cousin, the Princess Niloufer, magnificent work has been done, and is still being done while this is being written, in providing comforts and amenities to troops, both Indian and European. The Christmas and New Year hampers to troops from Hyderabad have become an annual feature, and the appeals for funds for this purpose have never failed to meet with generous response. Her Highness untiringly works with her own hands, making up the hampers and packing them. Apart from this, she is the leader of the 'Home Front' and her Women's Civil Defence Corps, formed by her, trained by her, and aptly named after her, is really an outstanding achievement of which the State, and particularly the women, have every reason to be proud.

In his brief summary of Hyderabad's war effort, noticed above, His Exalted Highness said he could speak with pride of his Army. His solicitude for the welfare of his soldiers has always had priority. He has not only had the Army reorganised and brought on a level with the most efficient fighting forces of modern times, but has been pleased to honour it by appointing his Heir-Apparent, H.H. the Prince of Berar, its Commander-in-Chief in 1936.

Here again the Nizam's choice has been fully justified ; for, within the short period during which the Prince has held command of the Army, he has raised its efficiency one hundred per cent., and has displayed those soldierly qualities for which the Asaf Jahs have always been renowned. The Prince has excelled in all branches of manly sport, and by his unfailing courtesy and charming manners has endeared himself not only to the soldiers but to every class of his father's subjects.

Sir Samuel Hoare, while he was Secretary of State for India, referring to the very vital services of the Nizam and the State of Hyderabad at every critical stage in the history of the British Empire, observed that "these are incidents we do not forget. Just as the Nizam and the State of Hyderabad have been loyal in their friendship to Great Britain, so we in Great Britain are determined to be steadfast in our friendship to Hyderabad."

This is undoubtedly an assurance which, if it had been acted upon, would have resulted in a gracious and sympathetic reply in the affirmative from Lord Reading to Nizam's very natural and just demand for the restoration to him of his province of Berar. Unfortunately, it was not acted upon, and the burning Berar Question still remains to be settled.

The somewhat late and tardy recognition of His Exalted Highness' sovereignty over the Berars in 1936, a sovereignty too that was never in doubt, cannot by any stretch of imagination be described as a settlement; for, "sovereignty without government," says the shrewd Shaikh Sadi, is a delusion and a snare, and has no durability—who is there that can honestly gainsay it?

His Exalted Highness was so absolutely sure of the justice of his legitimate demand, and so confident in obtaining it, that as early as 1919, in the course of his inaugural address to his newly constituted Executive Council, he explicitly declared:

"My own contributions, to win the World War, from which the British Empire has so triumphantly emerged, are too well-known for me to dwell upon. The Council will, therefore, find itself in a happy position to approach the all-important question of the restoration of the Berars. My claim to the possession of this integral part of my

Dominions is based on absolute justice, and it is inconceivable that, on examination, it can be ruled out."

Reading between the lines of his reply to the address of the Hyderabad Municipality and the citizens of Hyderabad, on his return from Delhi in 1928, it appears clear that his visit to Delhi has encouraged his hope of recovering Berar and that he had on the strength of this hope, decided to make the 'all-important approach' of which he spoke in 1919. If this had not been the case, he would surely have not with such great delight announced to his assembled subjects that the 'historic friendly relations subsisting between the British Government and the House of Asaf Jah' were nearing the meridian of cordiality, and that his visit to Delhi in 1928 had 'provided one more proof of this fact.'

It was in the plenitude of his faith in British Justice and his hope of success, which was fanned into conviction by his Delhi visit, that Sir Osman Ali Khan prepared and launched his now historic Berar Letter, putting forward his plea to one of the greatest jurists of England then living and holding the office of Viceroy—the late Lord Reading—for the restoration of his almost alienated province of Berar.

As the episode is now a part of ancient history, it need not be repeated here. It is sufficient to state that the great jurist's reply was not only an emphatic negative and, in fact, an extremely rude negative, but was given additional emphasis by its being released, like a blockbuster from a Super-Fortress, just after His Excellency had handed over to his successor and stepped on to the deck of a P. and O. Steamer, homeward-bound.

The Nizam had asked for bread, in the shape of his birthright, and received a particularly heavy stone, yecept PARAMOUNTCY, shattering all his most sanguine hopes.

“What is Paramountcy?” asks Mr. K. M. Panikkar, discussing this mysterious political contraption in his *Oxford Pamphlet on the Indian States*, and gives up the attempt at unravelling the riddle by stating, “all attempts which have so far been made to define paramountcy have failed, and the Butler Committee which was appointed to inquire into the relations between the States and the Crown had to take shelter under sententious statements like ‘paramountcy must remain paramount’ and ‘usage lights up the dark corners of treaties’.” All which lights up the dark corners of one’s understanding and advances one’s knowledge on the subject as much as one of Alexander Pope’s couplets—

“Why has not man a microscopic eye?
For this plain reason, man is not a fly;”

and for this plain reason paramountcy is paramountcy and cannot be anything else. As for its remaining paramount, it was so with a vengeance when Lord Reading penned his verdict, acting in the dual role of judge and defendant; and, perhaps, will remain so to the end of time if something is not done in the Post-War World to give it decent burial.

What reaction had this altogether unexpected ‘block-buster’ upon His Exalted Highness? Did it make him lose faith in British Justice, as it might naturally have done, or shake his traditional loyalty to the Crown? The Nizam must have suffered a disappointment as deep as his hopes were high; flesh and blood cannot be immune from such shocks; but he did not allow this terrible reverse and the resultant chagrin to interfere by a hair’s breadth with his belief in British Justice and his ardent loyalty to the British Crown. This is categorically borne out by the fact that, not long after this cruel disappoint-

ment, when the British Government appealed to the ruling princes of India to help them in concerting measures for an All-India Federation under the 1935 Act, His Exalted Highness was the first among them to respond most heartily.

Hyderabad's magnificent contribution to the cause of Indian Federation is too well-known to need detailed mention here, but it is noteworthy that the Nizam was also the first Indian Ruler to express his belief in the possibility of the States entering the Federation with the Provinces long before the Federal Scheme was seriously envisaged. The Nizam's faith in Federation and his enthusiastic support to it was felicitously alluded to by Sir Terence Keyes, the British Resident, at a banquet given in honour of the Princes' marriages at the Chowmahalla Palace in January 1932. Referring first to a speech made by His Exalted Highness at the banquet to welcome him (the Resident), Sir Terence said :

"In his speech His Exalted Highness alluded to the ferment which was then beginning to come to head, and made the momentous pronouncement that he desired his Dominions should play their part in evolving a system which would bring peace and prosperity to the whole of India.

"The future was then very obscure ; and it seemed to some that unless the States were ready to abandon their isolation and bring into the Commonwealth their splendid Spirit, their patriotism and their rich store of experience in tradition and rule—if they did not do this, there was little hope of devising a well-ordered settlement which would allow each fraction of the Empire to work out its own salvation within a harmonious whole.

"Well," continued the Resident, "His Exalted Highness resolutely turned away from all old grievances ('one of

them being the Berar episode') and took the lead, not only of the State but in a wider sphere, declaring that he was ready to enter an All-India Federation at once, under due safeguards for the sovereignty of the State, of course.

"He was not only the first ruler to make an announcement of this sort, but the first person of any importance with courage and conviction to express his belief in the possibility of the State entering a Federation with the Princes.

"It is a matter of common knowledge," concluded Sir Terence, "how the Hyderabad Delegation carried out this policy and made their mark on the Round Table Conference. Indeed, they brought the prestige of the Nizam and his Dominions to a very high level and made the whole Empire see that the title of 'Faithful Ally' was no empty formula."

At a banquet given in London by the Hyderabad Delegation to the Third Round Table Conference in his honour, the Secretary of State referring to His Exalted Highness, said: "True to the traditions of his ancestors, he has shown himself our staunch friend in moments of the Empire's greatest need. . . . His Exalted Highness has shown his wisdom in taking a very great interest in the Round Table Conference, and in the enthralling question of an All-India Federation, and he has shown his wisdom by sending to us three years in succession, one of the best Delegations that has ever been sent by any Prince or any Power to any International or Imperial Conference."

And this is how Sir Osman Ali Khan, forgetting the 'rebuff' (as a leading Indian daily captioned the Berar episode) administered to him by Lord Reading who curtly dismissed his demand for justice on the totally untenable score of an elusive thing called Paramountcy, stood staunchly by the British Government once again, unshaken

in his loyalty and generous in his co-operation, proudly proclaiming himself their 'Faithful Ally.'

The Berar Agreement of 1936, whereby he became 'The Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar,' and his Heir-Apparent received the title of 'H. H. the Prince of Berar,' is a step forward, however small, in the right direction and may, more likely than not, lead to a final settlement of the Berar Question, as well as some other outstanding questions regarding the revision of antiquated and out-of-date treaties, with many 'dark corners' in them, and quite incompatible with changed, modern conditions.

The sixteen millions of his subjects entertain by no means an extravagant hope that their Ruler will yet come into possession of his birth-right of Berar as well as some other territories that had been lopped away in the tumultuous days of John Company Bahadur. They had remained silent spectators when Lord Curzon politely dragooned the late Mahbub Ali Pashah into signing away the Berars under the notoriously enigmatic 'Lease-in-Perpetuity' device, miscalled a treaty. They were again 'dumb as a drum with a hole in it' when Osman Ali Pashah put in his claim for the Berars and failed; but with the growth of State-consciousness, they have become outspoken irredentists and have given expression to their views in no uncertain manner. With them, the restoration of the Berars, in particular, is 'a consummation devoutly to be wished.'

It is a little known fact that in Hyderabad there exists a parallel to the Indian Civil Service, known as the Hyderabad Civil Service. Like the former, it has played not an inconsiderable role in the enlightened administration of the State and, like its British Indian counterpart, it can appropriately be called Hyderabad's 'steel frame.' The origin of this institution can be traced back to 1882.

Since then the H.C.S., as it is briefly called, has gone on steadily from strength to strength and has built up an honourable tradition of loyalty to the Ruler and service to the people.

Like other old institutions of its kind, the H.C.S. has had its ups and downs, but has managed to surmount all vicissitudes, and obtained a new lease of life during the present Nizam's reign. The revival of the Service and its establishment on firm foundations is indeed one of the epoch-making events of the Seventh Asaf Jah's rule. Its re-inauguration was sanctioned by him in the very first year of his accession.

Entrance to the Civil Service Class is by open competition and, needless to say, the selection of candidates is governed by sheer merit of qualifications as well as character and by nothing else besides. No class or communal distinction is allowed, and as a result young men of all classes and creeds have found equal opportunities of serving the State and its Ruler.

Men of the H.C.S. hold the most responsible key-positions in the administration, and in its ranks are some of the most brilliant and distinguished sons of Hyderabad. There is also a Civil Service House which occupies a distinguished place in the history of the H.C.S. On account of the traditions it has evolved, the House is regarded by all the members who have passed through its portals as their *Alma Mater*.

Another feature, analogous to that of the I.C.S., is the Hyderabad Civil Service Association, which aims at 'fostering brotherly relations among the members of the Service, the safeguarding of its general interests, and the promotion of a common outlook with the object of serving the State more effectively.'

The team-spirit of the Service is further promoted and

maintained by the Association through the holding of annual social functions. Of these the 'Civil Service Commemoration Day' is the most important. At this function, foundation Medals, one of which is named after the late Sir George Casson Walker and another after the late the Rt. Hon. Sir Akbar Hydari, both of whom were intimately connected with the development of the H.C.S., are presented to candidates to whom they have been awarded. The H.C.S. has yet a greater role to play in Post-War Hyderabad, and judging by its past achievements, it may be depended upon to play it with equal distinction.

It is generally recognised that there is no better criterion of a State's progress than the amount of freedom enjoyed by its Press. Junius, who is responsible for the often quoted dictum that the liberty of the Press is the *palladium* of all civil, political and religious rights of Englishmen, is also responsible for insisting that 'the indulgence of private malice and personal slander should be checked and resisted by every legal means.' It is also true that the liberty of the Press widens automatically with the growth and development of representative Government, and that the reversal of this order of progress is likely to lead to the degeneration of liberty into licence and the resultant subversion of law and order. There should therefore be no cause for surprise at the manner in which the Press is sometimes controlled in British India as well as in the Indian States, seeing the immense influence it has with the intelligentsia, and the direction which is often given to that influence, inflaming the discontented and poisoning the minds of the loyal.

Nevertheless, it cannot be gainsaid that real and substantial progress on the moral as well as the material

plane is not possible if a degree of freedom, suited to the civil and political advance made by the people, is denied.

His Exalted Highness' subjects have reason to be thankful that the Press policy of the State is keeping pace with the people's progress in educational, civic and political spheres. With the creation of an Information Bureau, the Press policy has been widened considerably, and local newspapers and periodicals, the number of which is growing, are enjoying a degree of freedom which was unknown a couple of decades ago.

His Exalted Highness himself, in his capacity of ' Guide and Mentor ' (one of the titles by which he is addressed in memorials submitted to him) not infrequently uses the columns of the local Press to censure the Press itself when required, and to express his views on various matters of public importance.

Now that under the Reforms Scheme a Press Advisory Committee has been formed, and more than one press association has been recognised by Government, the position has been considerably improved ; and it rests entirely with the local journalists, by exercising sobriety, tact and fair-play in moulding public opinion and interpreting Government to the people and the people to Government, to make the Hyderabad Press respected, and elevate it to a ' fourth estate,' a dignity to which the Press has attained in the most advanced countries of the West.

In view of the fact that the key-note of the New Constitution is the " more effective association of different interests in the State with Government," a new era of usefulness and service is dawning for the local Press, and it is within the bounds of possibility, now more than ever before, to make the Press in Hyderabad the *palladium* of the rights as well as the loyalty of Hyderabadis.

In John Company Bahadur's days, and even earlier, the Deccan was noted as the happy hunting ground of adventurers, fortune-seekers and mountebanks. It is still the favourite venue of these gentry ; but they now go under the names of journalists, authors, art connoisseurs and other respectable labels. Of course, this is not meant as a reflection on the genuine article, but it is idle to deny that these disguises are adopted by black-mailers, propagandist mud-slingers and other 'Parasuramas' in search of grind-stones.

Not a few of this fraternity of free-lances and commercial travellers for publishers of sensationalism, manage to wangle State hospitality and enjoy all the luxury of State Guest Houses, only to show the cloven foot in printer's ink after they have left the State's frontiers well behind them. A glaring instance of abuse of hospitality occurred quite recently, and created such a furore that Sir William Barton, a former British Resident at the Nizam's Court, felt himself obliged to publish the following corrective in the British Press :

"With such a record of service in the present crisis, the Hyderabad Government had every reason to expect approval rather than criticism from the British Press. All the greater then was the surprise and annoyance in official and unofficial circles in Hyderabad at the publication in one or two British journals of extracts from an opprobrious article casting aspersions on the character of the Nizam, which appeared in a New York paper a few months ago.

"The hundred million Muslims of India look on Hyderabad as their rallying point. For this reason ill-informed attacks on the Nizam cause intense resentment to Indian Muslims and do not make any easier the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem.

“What Britain owes to Hyderabad and its Nizam should not be forgotten.

“Is it too much to ask that Indian Princes, like the Nizam, who are rendering unstinted service to the Empire in these dark days, should not be exposed to unfair and sensational attacks in the British press ? ”

It is not claimed for the Nizam that he is a paragon of perfection, nor does he himself advance any such absurd claim. No one in the State realises more than His Exalted Highness that there is plenty of room for improvement ; if he did not, Hyderabad State would not be well in the van of progress as it undoubtedly now is. Moreover, he is ever ready to welcome well-balanced, constructive criticism of a wholesome kind, and to benefit by it. But ill-informed criticism and personal attacks, either through ignorance or malice, is an ill-wind that blows nobody any good, as Sir William Barton has pointed out above.

In his Oxford Pamphlet on ‘India,’ Prof. Rushbrook Williams has observed that ‘the Indian States in general, and certain particular Princes,’ have become the targets of attack by Leftists and others. Deplorably enough, His Exalted Highness is often singled out as a target for baseless charges and the slinging of mud. For instance his thriftiness, which has been the foundation of Hyderabad’s prosperity, is often distorted into miserliness, his frugality and simplicity in dress are attributed to his love of amassing wealth for himself, and, in spite of his own declarations to the contrary and his even-handed justice and solicitude and practical sympathy for all his subjects, he is represented as another Aurangzeb, merely because he happens to be a Muslim in his personal religion ; whereas the unvarnished truth is that his acts proclaim him to be another Akbar the Great, if comparisons are to be made.

A favourite theme, and one which has been worked to death, is the legend that His Exalted Highness is 'the richest man in the world,' and the variations on this seem to be so inexhaustible, that one would fancy that the Nizam has transferred the diamond mines of Golconda plus El Dorado into his private treasury.

This worm-eaten platitude seems to possess the glamour of romance to writers. Even an author like Mr. Beverley Nichols has succumbed to its fascination, and has given it such prominence in his *Verdict on India*, that such of his readers as have no acquaintance with Hyderabad will more likely than not be deluded into believing that the Premier State of India offers nothing more interesting or important than its ruler's alleged fabulous hoard of precious stones and gold bullion.

One cannot but feel disappointed that a professedly acute observer like Mr. Nichols has failed to make better use of his visit to Hyderabad than indulging in puerile and fatuous speculations on the ruler's riches and unprofitable visits to somebody or other's salon. Had he looked round to better purpose, he would have seen that Mysore is not the only Indian State that has done wonders for the so-called untouchables. He would have seen several other things worth chronicling for the benefit of the country in the welfare of which he professes to be so exceedingly interested. But can one treat seriously a writer, who in one breath says the States "form a series of artificial barriers to the free development of commerce" and must therefore be eliminated, and in the very next breath quotes Lord Curzon to justify their existence as vitally necessary to Indian society?

One of the happiest events in Sir Osman Ali Khan's life was the romantic marriage of his Heir-Apparent and his younger brother, commonly alluded to as the Walashan

Brothers, to the daughter and niece respectively of the ex-Sultan Abdul Majid, of Turkey, in 1931. It was an event of absorbing interest to India at large as well as Hyderabad.

The Resident fittingly referred to it as a "great day in the annals of Hyderabad." He added that it was unique in the history of India, for, from the time when the Moghul Emperors began their great adventure of uniting under one rule the many warring races of this land, no ruling prince or heir to a ruling prince had ever sought his bride from a royal house beyond the seas. His Exalted Highness himself considered the event of such moment that he issued a *Firman* on the occasion, which ran as follows :

"By God's favour to-day, the 1st of Rajab 1350 Hijri, is a most auspicious day, inasmuch as the families of Asaf Jah and Osmanli (Turkey) have been joined by friendship and relationship. . . . At Nice, in Southern France, Khalifa Sultan Abdul Majid himself performed the *Nikka* ceremony and read the prayers, officiating as *Kazi* in the presence of high Government officials. The Government of India have very cordially given their assent to this matrimonial alliance. Finally, I pray that in future this day will be considered as a Red Letter Day in the history of Hyderabad. . . . Indeed, it is an event which shines out with its own splendour. As the *Nikka* of the Heir-Apparent and his brother has very fortunately been performed on the very day of my birth anniversary, a public holiday will be observed in the State, and, further, in remembrance of this event, 12th November will in future be observed as a public holiday throughout the State."

As stated already, the women of Hyderabad gained immensely by this marriage, for the charming consort of

the Heir-Apparent, the Prince of Berar, and her cousin, Princess Niloufer, have wrought a wonderful transformation in the lives of Hyderabad women, who are making their influence felt in the affairs of the State. Her Highness the Princess of Berar has completely identified herself with the women of Hyderabad, and made this quite explicit when she declared : " As Hyderabad is now my home, I identify myself with all your hopes and interests, your ambitions and aspirations, and the welfare of your children. Ever since I came here, I have waited for the time when you would consider me as one of yourselves and believe that I am always ready to co-operate with you in every way that will help to attain your happiness."

Another happy event in the annals of the State as well as in the Nizam's life, was the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of His Exalted Highness' reign. The fact that he completed the 25th year of his reign in the same year that the late King George V attained a like period in his great and glorious reign, was hailed as a most auspicious coincidence by his subjects.

Characteristically enough, the Nizam, with his innate love of ascetic simplicity, was opposed to the lavish expenditure of money on mere passing shows and ocular demonstrations, and severely whittled down proposals submitted for his approval by the Jubilee Committee. He preferred spending the bulk of the Jubilee funds in founding public institutions of permanent benefit. Consequently the grandeur and pomp which characterises similar festivities of Eastern princes, such as glittering elephant processions, and pageants dazzling to the eye and gorgeous with jewellery and cloth of gold, had no place in the Nizam's Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1937.

The only public demonstrations he allowed were chiefly confined to meeting his people, and to accepting their

addresses of congratulation and gratitude, and replying to them and sharing in their joy. It may be mentioned in this connection, that at this period complete tranquillity and communal harmony reigned supreme, while unrest prevailed everywhere else in India. In fact, Hyderabad enjoyed perfect communal peace, unbroken by even the slightest disturbance, until the year 1938 when, what the Nizam rightly described as 'baneful external influences' swept over the State like a tornado and ceased as suddenly; but ever since then the two major communities who had, in the words of His Exalted Highness, 'lived in complete harmony with one another, like milk-and-sugar, as the Persian saying is' have not been on the same cordial terms. However, 'the baneful external influences' had not snaked themselves into the garden of Hyderabad during the Jubilee year, and His Exalted Highness, replying to the congratulatory address presented by all sections of his subjects conjointly, was able to say :

"Nothing can give me greater pleasure than to see, as I do to-day, that the address on this occasion has been presented by my subjects unitedly, without distinction of class, sect or religion. This is a blessing which seldom falls to the lot of any ruler. . . . I assure you that my life is dedicated to the welfare of my beloved people. *To be their servant is a source of pride and distinction to me.*

"From the time of my ancestors it has been the tradition of my House that the ruler has always had deep love for his subjects and, irrespective of their race or religion, has considered their welfare as the highest aim of his life. I also have adhered to my ancestral tradition; and, if, during my rule, progress has been more rapid, I attribute this to the grace of God. If I have been able to do some little service to the State, I feel I am amply rewarded by the happiness and contentment of my subjects."

The italicised sentence, and, in fact, the whole context quoted, illustrate the Nizam's character better than any character sketch. Communal harmony and peace, coupled with law and order, constitute the key-stone of his administrative policy, and he never misses an opportunity of preaching this gospel. But he also puts it into actual practice. To take outstanding examples, he prohibited the slaughter of cows on the festival of *Bakr Id*, in order not to offend the religious susceptibilities of his Hindu subjects who regard the cow as sacred; similarly, he prohibited the carnival, during the solemn month of Moharrum, in which tiger-dancing and other mummeries used to figure prominently, in order not hurt the feelings of his *Shia* subjects, he himself being a *Sunni*. Again, with a view to bridging the gulf that had unfortunately been created between the two major communities by the disturbances of 1938 and preventing their recurrence he takes deep personal interest in promoting and supporting the Public Security Committee formed by one of his noblemen for this purpose.

It is not for nothing that he is addressed by the title of 'Guide and Mentor,' for he discharges the functions attached to it with vigilant care. No one in the State keeps himself better informed of all the happenings around him. Nothing, however trifling, escapes his notice. He is quick in censuring faults and misdemeanours as well as appreciating public services, of plebians as well as patricians.

Besides exercising his prerogative of granting titles to his subjects, he recently instituted three classes of Decorations in the shape of gold, silver and bronze medals, to be awarded for different kinds of public services. He has also introduced the granting of *Sanads* or certificates of merit in recognition of such services. He is well-known

as a censor of morals and a reformer of manners ; but particularly as a friend and guide of youth. Here is what he said to the youth of the State when he opened the Jubilee Pavilion :

“ It has always been my conviction that the moral and material advancement of my State is so linked with the improvement in the moral tone and progress, in various fields, of its youth, that if one be regarded as the primary object, the other becomes a necessary adjunct for its attainment. Having regard to the eminence of this State, its rich traditions and high aspirations, the burden of whose attainment will inevitably be borne solely by its youth, I expect them to be so equipped that, when the time comes, not only will they be capable of shouldering their responsibilities, but will also be able to handle the more difficult tasks that lie ahead ; for, although the State has made considerable headway in the path of progress, further stages of construction and readjustment are yet to follow. It is, therefore, my earnest desire that the unfettered energies of the youth of my State be directed to the achievement of worthy ends.

“ With this end in view, I have from time to time advised the youth of my State and indicated the lines they should follow to qualify themselves worthily to serve their sovereign and their country.

“ I am not unconscious of the fact that, on occasions, youth is naturally drawn to the pursuit of pleasure, but it is a matter for anxiety to see their opportunities being dissipated in forms of pleasure which, none will deny, are adopted from the worst features of other cultures and which, in addition to being morally reprehensible, are physically injurious—this, to the neglect of other forms of relaxation which exist and give at the same time, physical

and mental well-being and which, while providing recreation, are instructive and conducive to discipline.

"Let the youth of my State remember that in striving to mould their lives according to the high ideals of true citizenship, it is not enough for them to establish a high standard of personal integrity, but to extend it to the larger sphere which concerns their relations with their fellow-subjects, so that their public lives also may be free from indiscretions and may show, in a marked manner, solicitude for their fellow-beings, a just regard for their needs and interests, a broad toleration of different faiths, a fair appreciation of the services rendered by them and, above all, a love of honesty and justice.

"The noblest aims, on the other hand, can be corrupted by the employment of dishonourable means, and no man can be termed a human being until he has proper reverence for labour and love; nor are these limited to a man's conduct in private life, but are the principles on which the greatness and repute of the nations of the world are based; and this is the touchstone which will show the true worth of the youth of my State."

It has previously been observed that there are, subject to the Nizam, a number of feudal vassals or barons, both Muslim and Hindu, holding landed estates some of which are larger than small Indian Treaty States with proportionate revenues. At the head of these are the Paigah Nobles, or *Amirs*, who are closely related to the ruling family; and then come the Hindu fiefs, known as *Samasthans*, and a large number of *Jagir* estates, both large and small. His Exalted Highness considers these Nobles and Jagirdars as his especial charge, and takes the greatest personal interest in their family affairs. Replying to their address during his Silver Jubilee celebrations, he said :

"I specially appreciate the address presented by the Jagirdars. You belong to a class of gentry who stand in special and distinctive relations to the State of Hyderabad. My principle has always been that, as far as possible, Jagirs should continue to be preserved and that they should be saved from extinction. But this, to some extent, rests with the Jagirdars themselves. If they keep themselves free from the burden of debts and avoid litigation in matters of succession, and look after the management of their jagirs well, specially if they make efforts for the well-being of their tenants, I have every hope that this class will prove a tower of strength and a source of pride to the State."

Lord Wavell, alluding to the Nizam's *Firman*, urging the necessity of Jagirdars residing in and taking personal interest in the administration of their jagirs and doing something for their people, very appreciatively observed : "No advice could have been more timely ; for in these days no person in a privileged position can hope to remain so, without rendering some service to those from whom they draw their livelihood."

A well-organised Court of Wards exists to look after the estates of Jagirdars who happen to be minors, while first rate educational facilities have been provided for them, in the shape of a Residential Jagirdars' College, which is controlled by a Board of Governors, the President of which is Sahebzada Basulath Jah, the Nizam's younger brother. The Nizam deliberately chose his younger brother for the post of President of the Board, "to signify," as he himself said, "the bonds that my family has with this class and the interest that it has evinced in them."

Indeed, it was his special concern for the preservation of the Paigah estates that, some time back, when these

baronial fiefs were tottering on the verge of ruin, owing to extravagance and debt, that actuated the Nizam to put them under the supervision of the Court of Wards, and, in course of time, returned them to their holders, not only fully solvent, but with appreciable bank balances to their credit.

Thanks also to His Exalted Highness' paternal care, that the Hyderabad nobles, formerly looked upon as the drones of society, are now highly educated and cultured. Some of them have earned academic distinctions and hold responsible positions in the administration of the State, two of them holding Portfolios on the Executive Council.

The time-honoured custom of presenting *Nuzzaranas* to the Nizam on certain occasions has never failed to attract his traducers and maligners, who seize upon it as 'rich meat'; and misconstrue it as extortion. Nothing can be farther from the truth. The custom of presenting *Nuzzers*, as 'fines of relief' or a mark of homage to the sovereign, can be traced back to the Middle Ages in Europe as well as in Asia. It is one of the old ceremonial forms of paying homage to the ruler and reaffirming loyalty to his throne and person. It obtains in Hyderabad to-day, as many other similar ceremonial forms obtain at the Court of His Majesty the King-Emperor, and is confined entirely to members of the aristocracy and other high-ranking State officials. The amount of the *Nuzzer* as well as the occasions on which it should be presented, are governed by well-defined rules framed for the purpose.

For munificence the Nizam is certainly second to none among the magnanimous Princes of India. 'The nobler a soul is, the more objects of compassion it hath'; the Nizam's philanthropy, after covering his own State, has overflowed to the farthest bounds of India and beyond. Wherever he journeys he leaves a trail of bountiful relief

behind him, as his visits to Calcutta, Delhi and Madras, a few years back, attested. His generosity knows no bounds of race and creed, as borne out by his substantial benefactions to a variety of institutions belonging to all creeds and communities. The Benares University, the Bhandarkar Institute, Santaniketan, to mention only a few of the many institutions, enjoy liberal donations and grants from His Exalted Highness. In times of public distress, no cry has gone unheard by the Nizam, whether it be from London victims of German bombing, the Anatolia earthquake victims, the sufferers from the Bihar earthquake or the Bengal famine. He is indeed a splendid giver and comes down handsomely when he is convinced that the cause is deserving.

‘Where there is no vision the people perish.’ Hyderabad again, is fortunate in having for its ruler an experienced and sagacious statesman with the vision and imagination of a poet. It is a widely acknowledged fact that the Nizam possesses poetic genius of a high order; and his Persian *ghazals* are considered to be elegant examples of charming originality and creative power. The Nizam’s muse has touched on a great variety of subjects, but almost all his lyrics are intensely subjective and instinct with feeling. The joys and sorrows of life, as well as the desires of the human heart and the aspirations of the soul, are expressed in a mellifluous manner and conveyed through natural imagery. He clothes the sublimest thoughts and ideas in simple yet dignified diction. He has a predilection for the ‘good tidings of great joy’ the angel brought to the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem, and he indites an ode regularly every Christmas. These Christmas lyrics have been rendered into English by Sir Nizam-at Jung, one of the noted poets of Hyderabad, and published both in the local and outside papers.

In addition to being a poet, the Nizam is an accomplished musician, a fact that is not so well-known. He can discourse on the *zither* very pleasingly, and play accompaniments on the *tabla* (tabor) with a delicacy of touch and rhythm that mark him out as a taborist of a high order.

It is said that his artistic temperament, and particularly his taste for poetry, are gifts that run in the Asaf Jah family, the founder of which, the great Nizam-ul-Mulk having been a reputed poet in his days. The writing of poetry was a favourite leisure-time occupation of Mahbub Ali Pashah, the father of the present ruler. Hyderabad has indeed long been noted for its poets, thanks to the rulers themselves being poets and patrons of poetry. The nobles have not been slow in emulating their sovereign, a conspicuous example being the late Maharaja Sir Kishen Pershad Bahadur. Except Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Sir Nizam-ud-Din Khan, who have used English as the vehicle, all the others have used either Persian or Urdu, the latter being more favoured.

When Lord Hardinge visited Hyderabad in a private capacity in December 1930, nearly twenty years after his previous visit as Viceroy of India, to renew his acquaintance with the Nizam, he was pleasureably astonished to see the great strides the State had taken in every conceivable direction. Speaking at a banquet given to entertain him, he paid a handsome and well-deserved tribute to his host's capacity, energy of mind and administrative acumen, and bore testimony to the fact that Sir Osman Ali Khan had fulfilled his 'high ambition' to be a beneficent ruler, and had nobly redeemed the pledge he had taken when he stood on the threshold of his career.

It needs hardly be said that Hyderabad has been keeping abreast of the times, and has made great advances since

Lord Hardinge's visit, and evidences of progress are everywhere for those who have eyes to see and the capacity to understand and appreciate.

If the Nizam can be termed an autocrat, in spite of the large devolution of powers that he has effected, he has shown himself to be a benevolent one ; and if Mill's dictum be accepted, that an 'autocrat has the strongest motive to make use of ability wherever it exists.' It can be claimed for the Nizam that he has done so with signal success. That his 'true interest and only ambition is good government, conceived in the widest spirit of philanthropy,' is plainly evident by his *Firman*, accepting the proposals of his Cabinet Council relating to the New Constitution for Hyderabad, from which the following are a few relevant extracts :

" I pray that this Constitution may have the blessing of Providence. I commend it to all classes of my subjects ; to my Nobles, who are the pillars of my State ; to the holders of *Samasthans*, to my *Jagirdars* and *Maashdars*, who all enjoy grants from me ; to the agriculturists, who are the foundation of my State's economy, and who for the first time will be taken into such association with my Government ; to all those engaged in industry, trade, commerce and banking, or in the liberal professions ; to women with whom rests in such large measure the task of moulding a nation, and to all others of my beloved subjects.

" Since the time when Asaf Jah I founded this State, the Premier State of India, the rights of citizenship have been enjoyed equally by all subjects of the State, of whatever caste, creed or community, and, I trust, that in now exercising those widening rights, each will continue the tradition of mutual respect for the sentiments and interests of others, and thus, all who live under its benign

rule and protection, will work together for this State as a valued and indivisible asset of all.

“ I am confident that if worked in the spirit in which it has been conceived, this Constitution will provide both a large measure of present advance and a wide scope for future expansion as, in course of time, both my Government and my people acquire sufficient experience. I trust that both will share the spirit and desire that have actuated me throughout.

“ In the exercise of my sovereignty, under the guidance of Providence, I am deeply conscious of my responsibility for the good government of my State, and I am confident that in its due discharge I shall continue to command the best endeavours of all concerned in the same manner as I and my House have always possessed their loyalty and affection.”

With advancing years His Exalted Highness has not lost a tittle of his youthful enthusiasm and tenacity of purpose. The will to plan and the strength to execute, he still possesses in their pristine vigour; and so he continues to guide the destinies of his great State along the paths of peace and harmony, keeping steadily in view the ideal of unity in diversity, and with vigour unabated and vision undimmed. Nothing can divert him from his plighted word, and, among other intellectual gifts, he possesses a remarkably retentive memory; his faculty of recognising individuals whom casually he had met years before, is something really marvellous, as many can attest.

His success as a maker of Modern Hyderabad may be attributed chiefly to his habitual thriftiness, temperance and frugality, and his ascetic simplicity of life. Although he resides in a Palace and can command all the luxurious comforts and amenities of life, he occupies a sparsely furnished room in it, devoid of all glitter; reposes on a

simple pallet bed, and continues to work for the best part of the day, as he has always done, minutely scrutinising all documents sent up for his final orders, and very frequently returning them for further elucidation. And although he is assisted by a Cabinet Council of able and trustworthy Ministers, whom he consults frequently, this has not altered his habit of looking into things himself.

His habit of acquainting himself with the under-currents of life in his State, led to his being compared to Haroun Raschid; but the resemblance does not go beyond this point. Taking his character as a whole, he more resembles the early Caliphs of Islam, particularly the Caliph Omar; for, like the latter, he unflinchingly denounces extravagance and luxury wherever he comes across them, whether in the higher or lower spheres of life, and even among Muslim divines. According to an anecdote told to the present writer, a North Indian Muslim divine of great repute was down for an audience with the Nizam. The divine was ushered into the reception room at the appointed time. The Nizam chanced to obtain a glimpse of the reverend gentleman before meeting him, and saw that he was arrayed like Solomon in all his glory. The divine left without having an audience.

As a journalist of many years standing in the Hyderabad State, the present writer has had ample opportunities of observing the Nizam on many occasions and in a variety of circumstances, and has always found him to be every inch a ruler, devoid of all pose and full of quiet dignity, perfectly befitting a prince and a gentleman. There is nothing about him of 'the tide of pomp that beats upon the high shore of this world'; and he can crack a joke on occasion and enjoy the *bon mots* of those around him as heartily as any of them. But no better glimpse of the character of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad

and Berar can be had than that afforded by the Nawab Saheb of Chhatari, the present Chief Minister who, in the course of his Accession Day address in August 1944, made the following observations :

“ Whatever the nature or form of a Government, the concept that the servant of a nation is in reality its leader is an abiding truth. Whether the form of Government be democratic or personal ; whether, in the case of personal rule, it be a king or popular leader, he can alone lay claim to leadership who regards the service of the nation as his first and foremost duty.

“ And here I cannot help remarking that the example which the life of our benevolent sovereign sets before our rich youth does not need to be stressed. The wealth of the State is not spent on the Ruler's amusements and diversions, or, instead of being utilised for the benefit of the country, wasted in shows and pageants.

“ Not only is our sovereign very close to his people, but he is also easily accessible to all his subjects. It is for this very reason that he insists,—and rightly so —that all his subjects, high or low, should look up to him alone for everything.

“ Ever since His Exalted Highness conferred on me the honour of the Presidentship of the Executive Council, I have been privileged frequently to come into close contact with His Exalted Highness. It has been my invariable experience that whenever any proposal calculated to serve the public interest has been submitted to His Exalted Highness, he has always graciously given it his immediate assent.

“ Indeed, there are cases where existing rules prevented us from submitting proposals exceeding the prescribed limit ; if these rules affected the interest of indigent or

poor persons, His Exalted Highness commanded the relaxation of such rules, as a concessional measure.

“ There are many instances of instructions being received from His Exalted Highness to come to the rescue of persons of whose misfortunes he may have heard.

“ How deep is his Exalted Highness' concern for the welfare of his subjects is revealed by his daily routine. His Exalted Highness gets up at 6 o'clock in the morning. After his ablutions he peruses several newspapers. From ten to four every day His Exalted Highness is preoccupied with the work of the State. In the evening he goes without fail to the tomb of the *Mader-e-Deccan* ('Mother of the Deccan') where he recites the *Fateha*.

“ Twice a week His Exalted Highness grants audience to the President of the Executive Council to discuss with him the affairs of the State.

“ The blessings of His Exalted Highness' reign are everywhere apparent, and all subjects of His Exalted Highness, irrespective of caste or creed, benefit from, and are thankful for, them. It is the result of the measures adopted by His Exalted Highness during the thirty-three years of his reign, for the prosperity and the betterment of his beloved subjects and the lead given by him to his people and country, that we find ourselves to-day in a Hyderabad which has a political, economic and social importance all its own ; and the future, under his leadership, promises to be even brighter than the past or the present. . . . I am confident that sections of the people will, as far as lies in their power, not only cooperate with Government in extending and implementing the programme designed for the collective progress and prosperity of His Exalted Highness' subjects, but will also be prepared to make the necessary sacrifices—which are not in reality,

sacrifices, but the true service of the nation and the country."

It is necessary to pause for a moment here, to explain that the *Mader-e-Deccan*, or 'Mother of the Deccan' mentioned above by the Nawab Saheb of Chhatari, is the title by which the memory of His Exalted Highness' mother, who died recently, has been perpetuated by the people of Hyderabad. They have also instituted a memorial fund of two lakhs of rupees, known as the *Mader-e-Deccan Educational Fund*, the income accruing from which is to be used in granting scholarships to boys and girls, irrespective of caste and creed. In approving the object of the Fund, the Nizam laid emphasis on the general purpose of it, and said :

"Children of every community living in my Dominions should participate in the benefits of this continuous generosity, for the departed soul was a loving mother to all my people and not to any particular section of them."

The Nizam's edicts and public utterances, it may here be noted, are replete with passages, similar to the above ; passages that reflect his solicitude for all sections of his people, whose 'obedient servant' he actually subscribed himself in autographing a portrait of himself at the opening of the Arts College. Here is another striking passage from one of his public addresses :

"I always look upon the troubles of my beloved subjects as my own, and in the course of my tours or on other occasions, when I come to know of their hardships, I always make up my mind to remove their troubles or supply their wants. . . . Just as you are proud of me, I am also proud that God Almighty has given me such faithful, loyal and devoted subjects ; and I also keep in view the protection of your lives and property and the ensuring of your well-being."

It is these acts of ardent sympathy and kindness, as well as the knowledge of a common patrimony and the predominant sentiment of loyalty to their sovereign, as the great unifying factor in the State, towering above all differences, that have endeared Asaf Jah VII to the sixteen millions of his subjects. It is this unifying force that has given rise to what has now become known as Deccani or Mulki sentiment, which is in essence the pride of Hyderabadis in their past and their determination to defend and strengthen themselves by their own exertions. It explains the existence of that quality, something more than mere local patriotism, which may be termed State-consciousness, influencing the thoughts and ambitions of the people of Hyderabad far more than those of any other Indian State. No student of the history and politics of Hyderabad can arrive at a true appraisal of the forces at work there without appreciating the sense of that perspective. As an eminent Hyderabadi has expressed it :

“ The sentiment does not come in the way of others ; it only asks for internal development on the lines of our own genius. It therefore naturally resents interference by outside elements which have not solved their own problems and have, therefore, nothing to teach beyond what we may ourselves in accordance with our needs, choose to learn or adopt of their best. It is not merely isolationist, or an assertion of a kind of Monroe doctrine which we have seen buried in our own days in the very place of its birth. The independence of Nizam-ul-Mulk did not come in the way of his marching to the defence of Delhi against an Iranian invader ; and to-day, the armed forces of his seventh successor are fighting against an even greater menace to the integrity of India. They signify the bonds which unite us with the rest of India,

and the homage we pay to the continuance of the unity of Indian history."

This monograph on His Exalted Highness Sir Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur, G.C.S.I., Asaf Jah VII, 'Faithful Ally of the British Government,' cannot be more fittingly concluded than in the words of the Nawab Saheb of Chhatari, Prime Minister of Hyderabad, when he said :

"Error and forgetfulness are inseparably linked with humanity. But fortunate the people who possess so sympathetic a ruler, the embodiment of virtues, who loves them so deeply. These are the reasons for the great love and reverence which the people of Hyderabad cherish for their Sovereign, and which has been and, may it please God, shall remain the distinctive feature of Hyderabad."
